

JUSTICES SAY NO TO STUDENT LOAN RELIEF

Web Designer Wins Right  
To Turn Away Gay People

By **ABBIE VANSICKLE** and **ADAM LIPTAK**

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court sided on Friday with a web designer in Colorado who said she had a First Amendment right to refuse to design wedding websites for same-sex couples despite a state law that forbids discrimination against gay people.

Justice Neil M. Gorsuch, writing for the majority in a 6-to-3 vote, said that the First Amendment protected the designer, Lorrie Smith, from being compelled to express views she opposed.

"A hundred years ago, Ms. Smith might have furnished her services using pen and paper," he wrote. "Those services are no less protected speech today because they are conveyed with a 'voice that resonates farther than it could from any soapbox.'"

The case, though framed as a clash between free speech and gay rights, was the latest in a series of decisions in favor of religious people and groups, notably conservative Christians.

The decision also appeared to suggest that the rights of L.G.B.T.Q. people, including to same-sex marriage, are on more vulnerable legal footing, particularly when they are at odds with

claims of religious freedom. At the same time, the ruling limited the ability of governments to enforce anti-discrimination laws.

The justices split along ideological lines, and the two sides appeared to talk past each other. The majority saw the decision as a victory that safeguarded the First Amendment right of artists to express themselves. The liberal justices viewed it as something else entirely — a dispute that threatened societal protections for gay rights and rolled back some recent progress.

In an impassioned dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor warned that the outcome signaled a return to a time when people of color and other minority groups faced open discrimination. It was the second time this week that the justice summarized her dissent from the bench, a rare move that signals deep disagreement. Appearing dismayed, Justice Sotomayor spoke for more than 20 minutes.

"This case cannot be understood outside of the context in which it arises. In that context, the outcome is even more distressing," she wrote in her dissent.

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Near the Supreme Court on Friday. Nearly 26 million borrowers had applied for debt forgiveness.

Political Setback  
Isn't the End,  
Biden Vows

By **ADAM LIPTAK**

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court ruled on Friday that the Biden administration had overstepped its authority with its plan to wipe out more than \$400 billion in student debt, dashing the hopes of tens of millions of borrowers and imposing new restrictions on presidential power.

It was a resounding setback for President Biden, who had vowed to help borrowers "crawl out from under that mountain of debt." More than 45 million people across the country owe \$1.6 trillion in federal loans for college, according to government data, and the proposed debt cancellation, announced by Mr. Biden last summer, would have been one of the most expensive executive actions in U.S. history.

The decision, the last of a tumultuous term, was part of a trio of muscular rulings on Thursday and Friday in which the court divided 6 to 3 along partisan lines. In addition to rejecting the loan forgiveness program, the court's conservative majority also sharply limited affirmative action in higher education and dealt a blow to gay rights.

The dismissal of the plan intensified pressure on Mr. Biden to try to fulfill a promise to a key constituency as his bid for re-election gets underway, and he made clear in remarks on Friday that he would seize on the ruling as a campaign issue.

"Today's decision has closed one path," Mr. Biden said, adding that he had directed his education secretary to examine a different law by which his administration could forgive debt. "Now we're going to pursue another."

But the Supreme Court's decision, the latest in a series of rulings curbing presidential power in the absence of clear congressional authorization, limited Mr. Biden's alternatives and suggested that other attempts to address student debt would be met with skepticism at the court.

Chief Justice John G. Roberts

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An officer killed a teenager this week, igniting large protests.

French Police  
Lack Training  
On Gun Rules

By **CONSTANT MÉHEUT**

PARIS — For years, French police unions argued that officers should get broader discretion over when to shoot at fleeing motorists. Time and again, lawmakers refused.

Finally in 2017, after a string of terrorist attacks, the government relented. Eager to be tough on crime and terrorism, lawmakers passed a bill allowing officers to fire on motorists who flee traffic stops, even when the officers are not in immediate danger.

"For politicians, because this was real politics, it was hard to say no," recalled Frédéric Lagache, a leader of the police union Alliance Police who pushed forcefully for the law.

Since that law passed, the number of fatal police shootings of motorists has increased sixfold, according to data compiled recently by a team of French researchers and shared with The New York Times. Last year, 13 people were shot dead in their vehicles, a record in a country where police killings are rare.

The law has come under fresh scrutiny after a police officer killed a teenage driver during a traffic stop this week, shocking the country and igniting street protests and riots. Several lawmakers have called for a repeal or revision of the law.

Union leaders, including those who supported the law, say training on what it permitted was wo-

*Continued on Page A8*

Many Yeshivas  
Breaking Law,  
City Concludes

By **ELIZA SHAPIRO** and **BRIAN M. ROSENTHAL**

Eighteen private schools run by the Hasidic Jewish community have been breaking the law by not providing their students with an adequate secular education, New York City officials said on Friday.

The findings were an extraordinary rebuke of the schools, known as yeshivas, which receive hundreds of millions of dollars in public money annually but have long resisted outside oversight.

The determinations about the schools, which offer intensive religious lessons in Yiddish but little instruction in English, math or other secular subjects, marked the first instance of the city concluding that private schools had failed to provide a sufficient education.

The move was all the more remarkable because it was made by a city government that has shied away from criticizing the politically influential Hasidic community. And it stemmed from a long-stalled investigation that spanned eight years and two mayoral administrations and was often hobbled by political interference and bureaucratic inertia.

If the state Education Department upholds the findings, as is expected, the schools could be required to submit detailed improvement plans and undergo government monitoring. The law, however, does not make clear what consequences the schools might face if they do not commit to improving.

A spokesman for the city's Department of Education said in a statement that the agency had performed a "thorough, fair review" of the Hasidic schools.

"As always, our goal is to build trust, work with the community, and ensure schools are in compliance with state education law and regulations," the spokesman, Nathaniel Styer, said, adding, "Our goal is to educate children, not to punish the adults."

A spokesman for some of the yeshivas, Richard Bamberger, said in a statement that the Hasidic community "rejects the attempt to

*Continued on Page A17*

Diversity in Workplace Could Next Face Limits

By **NOAM SCHEIBER**

As a legal matter, the Supreme Court's rejection of race-conscious admissions in higher education does not in itself impede employers from pursuing diversity in the workplace.

That, at least, is the conclusion of lawyers, diversity experts and political activists across the spectrum — from conservatives who say robust affirmative action programs are already illegal to liberals who argue that they are on firm legal ground.

But many experts argue that as a practical matter, the ruling will discourage corporations from putting in place ambitious diversity policies in hiring and promotion — or prompt them to rein in existing policies — by encouraging lawsuits under the existing legal standard.

Companies Might Alter Recruitment Policies to Avoid Lawsuits

After the decision on Thursday affecting college admissions, law firms encouraged companies to review their diversity policies.

"I do worry about corporate counsels who see their main job as keeping organizations from getting sued — I do worry about hyper-compliance," said Alvin B. Tillery Jr., director of the Center for the Study of Diversity and Democracy at Northwestern University, who advises employers on diversity policies.

Programs to foster the hiring and promotion of African Americans and other minority workers

have been prominent in corporate America in recent years, especially in the reckoning over race after the 2020 murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer.

Even before the ruling in the college cases, corporations were feeling legal pressure over their diversity efforts. Over the past two years, a lawyer representing a free-market group has sent letters to American Airlines, McDonald's and many other corporations demanding that they undo hiring policies that the group says are illegal.

The free-market group, the National Center for Public Policy Research, acknowledged that the outcome on Thursday did not bear directly on its fight against affirmative action in corporate America. "Today's decision is not relevant,"

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This Broadcast TV Genre Continues to Thrive: G\_ME SH\_WS

By **JOHN KOBLIN**

One by one, as streaming services grow in popularity, old standbys of the TV landscape are falling by the wayside.

The number of soap operas, a decades-old linchpin of daytime television, has fallen to a small handful. Hit daytime talk shows — once hosted by the likes of Phil Donahue, Oprah Winfrey and Ellen DeGeneres — are becoming rarer by the year. Late-night shows are dwindling.

But one golden oldie is still standing strong: game shows.

ABC's lineup this fall is populated by many of them. On CBS, one of the longest-running shows, "The Price Is Right," is getting a new studio. And ratings for "Jeopardy!" and "Wheel of Fortune," tops in the category, are among the most-watched programs in television — at least outside of live sports. Both attract around nine million viewers on a typical night, and generate tens of millions of dollars in profit each year.

This week, Sony, the studio behind both "Jeopardy!" and "Wheel of Fortune," gave the genre an emphatic vote of confidence. The company signed Ryan Seacrest, one of television's most recognizable personalities, to a long-term



"Wheel of Fortune" named Ryan Seacrest its host starting next year, when he'll replace Pat Sajak.

deal to replace Pat Sajak as the next host of "Wheel of Fortune."

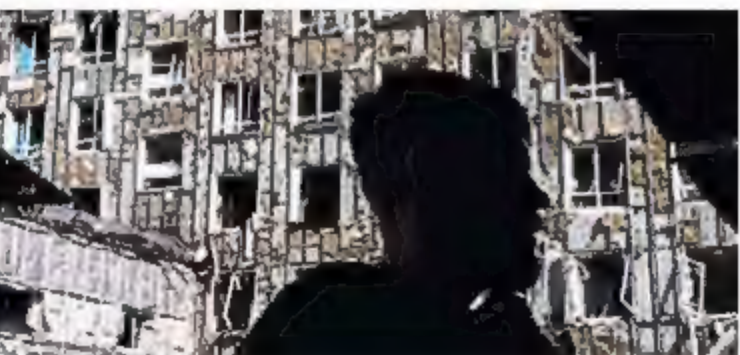
The audience for Sony's two shows is, in the words of one executive at a rival studio, "shockingly big." Adam Nedeff, a researcher at the National Archives of Game Show History at the Strong National Museum of Play, said "Wheel of Fortune" "has survived even beyond the wildest expectations of success."

"'Wheel of Fortune' remains this giant," said Mr. Nedeff, who is the author of "Game Shows FAQ," a history of the format. "As the TV business changes, and streaming takes over the world, 'Wheel' is one of the things that endures on the old traditional model of TV."

Game shows offer two big benefits for executives: They are one of the least expensive programs to create, in part because many episodes can be filmed in a short period. And they are attractive to the largest demographic group that still consumes traditional television — people 60 and older.

The median "Wheel of Fortune" viewer is in the oldest age bracket that Nielsen tracks: "65+." (The

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INTERNATIONAL A4-9

**Staying in a Destroyed Town**

Avdiivka, Ukraine, had a prewar population of about 30,000. By March, only around 1,700 people remained. PAGE A6

**Penalty for Election-Fraud Lies**

Former President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil was barred from seeking public office again until 2030. PAGE A9

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**Optimism on Wall Street**

As companies begin to report earnings and make forecasts, investors are looking for signs of resilience, while executives are playing cautious. PAGE B1

**Ex-Producer Settles With Fox**

Abby Grossman, who was head of booking on "Tucker Carlson Tonight," agreed to a \$12 million payout. PAGE B5

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**'The Tragedy of Cindy'**

Decades after Cindy Birdsong was in the Supremes, her family seeks to place her in a conservatorship. PAGE C1



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**Interim N.Y.P.D. Leader**

Edward Caban, tapped to take over from Keechant L. Sewell, above, is an ally of Mayor Eric Adams. PAGE A17

**Inmates Face Sweltering Heat**

The June heat wave in Texas has been dangerous for those inside prisons, which lack air-conditioning. PAGE A11

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**Tournament and Jewelry Show**

The Boodles, which draws elite players tuning up for Wimbledon, is unlike anything else on the tennis calendar — a Gatsby-like few days on a 300-acre estate outside London. PAGE B6

**LIV Resists Senate Invitation**

Within two weeks of a planned hearing about a deal that could reshape golf, lawmakers are struggling to assemble a witness list, particularly one that includes Greg Norman. PAGE B7

OPINION A18-19

**David French**

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OBITUARIES B9-10

**Comic Actor With Serious Side**

A four-time Academy Award nominee, Alan Arkin got laughs on Broadway and in movies, but he also had a flair for drama. He was 89. PAGE B10





# Inside The Times

## The New York Times

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## The Newspaper and Beyond

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	Crossword C3	Weather A20
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**AUDIO**

Times critics rounded up five classical music albums that they enjoyed in June. Hear samples from their selections, which include a Wynton Marsalis symphony and a Paola Pres-tini opera, at [nytimes.com/music](https://nytimes.com/music).

**TELEVISION**

In Season 2, Episode 3 of the Max series “And Just Like That ...”, Carrie (Sarah Jessica Parker) fakes getting Covid in order to get out of recording the audio version of her memoir, and the lie spills over into the rest of her life. Read Ali Trachta’s recap at [nytimes.com/tv](https://nytimes.com/tv).

**NEWSLETTER**

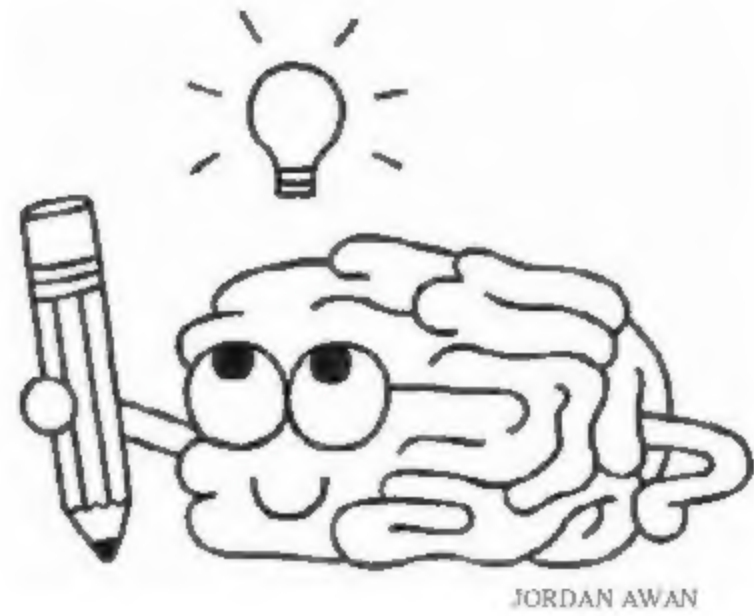
David French, a Times Opinion columnist, reflects on law and culture, war and peace, and the deeper trends that define and divide America in his weekly subscriber-exclusive newsletter. Sign up at [nytimes.com/newsletters](https://nytimes.com/newsletters).

## Quote of the Day

“People used to live here, but they left. Today, I’m the only inhabitant of the street.”

**SERHIY ALBERTOVYCH**, 63, said as he stepped carefully across the rubble on the ground floor of the apartment building he calls home in Avdiivka, eastern Ukraine. It was bombed in March 2022 and again one year later. Page A6.

## The News Quiz



Did you follow the headlines this week?  
Take our quiz to find out.

**1. A mercenary force led by Yevgeny Prigozhin revolted against Russian leadership last weekend. What is the name of the group?**

- a. Blackwater
- b. Fancy Bear
- c. GRU Spetsnaz
- d. Roscomsos
- e. Wagner

**2. After the uprising was called off, Russia announced that Mr. Prigozhin would be granted amnesty and would relocate to which country?**

- a. Belarus
- b. Finland
- c. Moldova
- d. Poland
- e. Ukraine

**3. A large area of the United States experienced a heat wave this week. Which states had sweltering temperatures under the so-called heat dome? Select all that apply.**

- a. Florida
- b. Illinois
- c. Louisiana
- d. Texas
- e. Washington

**4. Recently, Pat Sajak announced that he would retire as the host of “Wheel of Fortune” next year. Who was named this week to replace him?**

- a. Kelly Ripa
- b. Oprah Winfrey
- c. Ryan Seacrest
- d. Steve Harvey
- e. Tom Brady

**5. The Supreme Court struck down affirmative action at U.S. colleges, long a pillar of higher education. Which universities’ admissions policies were at the heart of the case? Select all that apply.**

- a. Georgetown University
- b. Harvard University
- c. New York University
- d. University of North Carolina
- e. University of Texas at Austin



VIA SOTHEBY'S

**6. The painting above, “Lady With a Fan,” sold this week for about \$108 million, the highest price ever for a public sale in Europe. Who is the artist?**

- a. Gustav Klimt
- b. Jasper Johns
- c. Mark Rothko
- d. Pablo Picasso
- e. Yayoi Kusama

**7. Which in-demand medication may soon come in pill form, after research found the pills were about as effective as injections?**

- a. Ibuprofen
- b. Insulin
- c. Ozempic
- d. Oxycodone
- e. Spironolactone

**8. Yusef Salaam, one of the so-called Central Park 5 who were wrongfully accused in the rape and assault of a jogger in 1989, appears to have won a major upset in his race for what office?**

- a. Brooklyn borough president
- b. New York attorney general
- c. New York City Council member
- d. New York City mayor
- e. New York state senator

**9. The Yankees pitcher Domingo Germán threw a perfect game on Wednesday, retiring all 27 batters he faced. When was the last perfect game in Major League Baseball?**

- a. July 2, 1975
- b. July 18, 1999
- c. Aug. 15, 2012
- d. Oct. 31, 2019
- e. Feb. 2, 2023

**10. Violent protests engulfed France this week, with demonstrators burning cars and setting fire to buildings. What was the cause of the protests?**

- a. A conference of international oil executives
- b. The end of free Covid vaccines
- c. A general strike over public-worker pensions
- d. A police killing of a teenage driver
- e. A vote to raise the retirement age

The News Quiz is published on Fridays in the Morning newsletter. To sign up, visit [nytimes.com/themorning](https://nytimes.com/themorning).

Solutions: 1. E; 2. A; 3. A, C and D; 4. C; 5. B and D; 6. A; 7. C; 8. C; 9. C; 10. D.

## Today's Top Trending Headlines

► **Supreme Court Strikes Down Biden’s Debt Forgiveness Plan** In a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court rejected the plan President Biden had promised millions of Americans he would fulfill: to cancel more than \$400 billion in student loan debt. It was projected to help 40 million people. A team of Times journalists examined the implications, explained the court’s opinions and updated readers with reactions from members of Congress, activists and education leaders, among others.

► **Five Ways College Admissions Could Change** Stephanie Saul, a national education reporter, wrote about the consequences of another Supreme Court decision, one that struck down affirmative action in college admissions. The absence of race-conscious admissions programs could not only dramatically curtail the number of Black and Hispanic students at selective colleges, it could end legacy admissions and put more weight on the college essay.

► **Man Accused in Jan. 6 Riot Is Arrested With Weapons Near Obama’s Home** “I’m outside Barack Obama’s house,” the man said on a livestream just before his arrest on Thursday afternoon near former President Barack Obama’s Washington home. Inside the van he drove to the neighborhood, police found weapons, ammunition and materials that could make explosives. It was not clear if the Obamas were home at the time.

► **11 Have Died in Rip Currents Along the Gulf Coast. Here’s How to Escape One.** Beachgoers are primed for cool waters with rising temperatures this summer, but swimmers should be vigilant against the dangers lurking in rip currents, experts told Remy Tumin, a breaking news reporter for The Times. “I have seen strangers die trying to save their children and loved ones, including two fathers on Father’s Day,” one sheriff wrote in a Facebook post.

## A Headline From History

## A FAMILY THAT CHOSE TO LIVE AMONG THOUSANDS OF FROGS

**July 1, 1972.** John Aderhold’s dream to raise frogs as a culinary delicacy began when he saw a Walt Disney cartoon with a frog bouncing across the screen. So with his wife and children, he started Goggle Eye Frog Farm on their spread in Long Branch, Texas. The New York Times visited the family business that provided frogs not to eat, but instead to help science. In 1972, Goggle Eye Frog Farm was expected to produce 10,000 frogs for use in education and at research institutions. “We like to think that we are helping rid mankind of dread diseases like cancer, heart trouble or glaucoma,” Mr. Aderhold told The Times. Goggle Eye frogs were “really super,” said Dudley Culley, a zoologist at Louisiana State University, adding they were “the kind that most labs should be using.” Perhaps Mr. Aderhold was destined for the work. When asked what he did in the Navy when he served during World War II, he said, “I was a frogman.”



## Facts of Interest

In 1969, Cindy Birdsong, a member of the Supremes from 1967 to 1976, was kidnapped at knifepoint from her apartment and escaped by jumping from a moving vehicle.

When Motown's Glamour Wore Off C1

No player has suffered the perils of hitting at Busch Stadium more than Harrison Bader, whose .634 on-base plus slugging percentage at that park is the worst for any player with at least 500 career plate appearances.

Facing His Former Team, a New Yorker Who Is Thriving Back Home B8

Prisons in commonly hot states like Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi do not provide centralized air-conditioning in most cases, according to a 2019 report.

Surviving Texas Heat in Prisons Without Air-Conditioning A11

In the production “Patriots,” Tom Hollander plays Boris Berezovsky, a real-life oligarch who fell out with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and ended up exiled in London, where he died under mysterious circumstances, in 2013.

What It's Like to Inhabit The Role of Putin in 'Patriots' C2

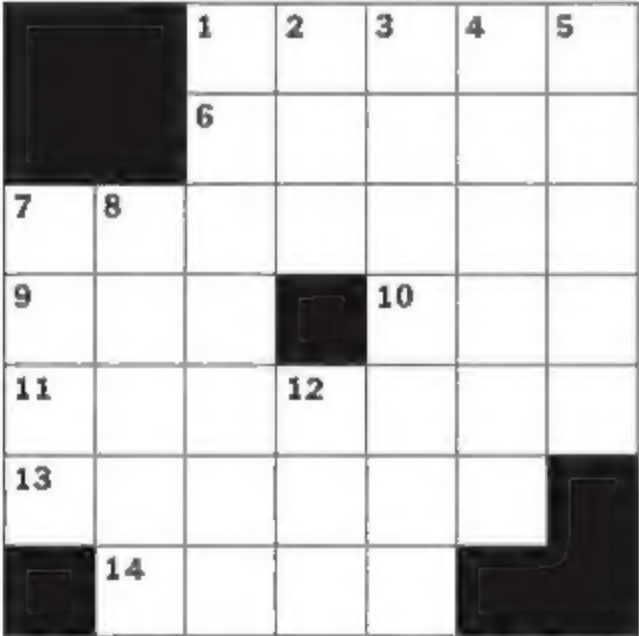
Apple, the largest company in the S&P 500, reached a record high in the stock market this week, pushing it within reach of becoming the first company to be valued at more than \$3 trillion.

Wall Street Is Feeling Optimistic B1

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's victory over Jair Bolsonaro by just 2.1 million votes last year was Brazil's closest presidential election since the country returned to democracy in 1985.

Brazil Bars Bolsonaro From Office For Fraud Claims A9

## The Mini Crossword



7/1/2023 BY JOEL FAGLIANO

- ACROSS**
- 1 Characteristic spirit
  - 6 What word becomes shorter when you add letters to it?
  - 7 What is the only seven-letter word to use all five vowels and Q?
  - 9 Water, in French
  - 10 Seoul's country: Abbr.
  - 11 Chicago newspaper
  - 13 Pieces of bacon
  - 14 Female chickens

- DOWN**
- 1 Men's fashion magazine
  - 2 Day before Fri.
  - 3 Casual flings
  - 4 \_\_\_ Belt (constellation)
  - 5 Look intently
  - 7 Sections of tennis matches
  - 8 What is the only planet in our solar system not named for a deity?
  - 12 Recycling container

### SOLUTION TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

H	U	H	
U	N	I	O
N	I	K	K
S	T	E	A
	D	Y	E

## Might We Suggest . . .

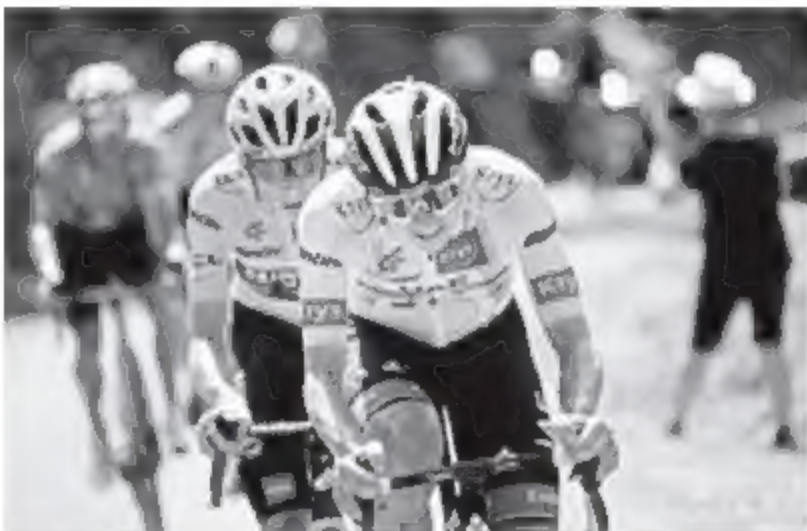
Four Weekend Recommendations From Around the Newsroom

### 1 Dressing Up Your Barbecue

Barbecue sauce is as delectable as it is debatable. But there's one thing we can all agree on: Simplicity is worth celebrating. This Fourth of July weekend, the Times Cooking team presents recipes for three sauce variations that require just three ingredients each (not counting salt and pepper). Treat your taste buds at [nytimes.com/food](https://www.nytimes.com/food).

### 2 Going for a Bike Ride

The Tour de France kicks off its 110th edition today. Our primer tells you what to watch for in this year's race, but why stop there? Cycling is good for both your health and the environment's, and you don't need to pedal 2,115 miles to reap its rewards. While your route may not involve Alpine vistas or the French countryside, there's plenty more open road to explore. [nytimes.com/sports](https://www.nytimes.com/sports)



DANIEL COLE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

### 3 Watching Out for Creepy-Crawlies

Ahh, summertime. Long walks in the park. Backyard cornhole matches. Bloodthirsty ticks looking to climb aboard a fresh host. Unpleasant and nearly unavoidable, the parasites are part and parcel of summer, and some experts warn that this tick season could be particularly bad. New tick species, bearing new pathogens, are expanding their range, prompting health officials to recommend full-body checks multiple times a day. Learn more about how to protect yourself at [nytimes.com/science](https://www.nytimes.com/science).

### 4 Making Peace With Your Past Self

Remember that journal you kept as an angst-ridden teenager? If not, you can hardly be blamed; many of us have blocked such puberty-era chronicles from our memories, writing them off as too cringey to revisit. But not Mackenzie Thomas, a 24-year-old who has blown up on TikTok by posting videos in which she reads aloud her old diary entries. Many of her followers say that the memoirs — raw, funny, painful — help ease their own adolescent embarrassments. “If I'm able to work my past humility and shame into stuff that makes millions of people feel seen, that's the ultimate gift,” Ms. Thomas said. Maybe it's time for a re-read, or better yet, a fresh journal. No filter needed. [nytimes.com/style](https://www.nytimes.com/style)

## Second Look

As the World Turns



JULIE BENRASSAT

Every school child learns that Earth is slightly tilted on its axis as it rotates and makes its way around the sun. The tilt has changed through the ages, but it has shifted more dramatically in the last few decades, with implications for navigational systems. The change comes partly from melting of the polar ice sheets and glaciers. New research shows that it is also shifting because of the massive quantities of water humans have pumped out of the ground for crops and households, especially as droughts have worsened. The discovery broadens our understanding of how we affect the world shifting beneath us.

## Here to Help

How to Get Rid of Old Electronics

Whether you're getting rid of an ancient desktop computer that's been collecting dust in your garage, or you're unloading a useless kitchen gadget that you impulse-bought on Instagram, here are the best ways to recycle electronics. **SARAH WITMAN**

**Drop them off.** Contact your city's sanitation department or use a searchable database on sites such as Call2Recycle, Earth911, GreenCitizen and Greener Gadgets to find a recycling facility near you that accepts electronic-waste drop-offs. Also, keep an eye out for e-waste recycling drives in your community.

**Mail them in.** Ask your city's sanitation department if a local e-waste recycler has a mail-in program. Otherwise, the Earth911 database shows results for national mail-in programs that accept e-waste from your ZIP code. You can recycle electronics via mail-in boxes from Call2Recycle (which accepts batteries and cellphones) and TerraCycle (which accepts a wide variety of e-waste), though they charge for services.

**Leave them out for pickup.** Sadly, most municipalities don't offer curbside pickup for electronics. But you can see if yours is one of the few that do by checking the Earth911 database for a color-coded list of the items accepted during routine pickups. You can also contact your local recycler to ask if it offers monthly or annual e-waste pickups, or if it will let you schedule one.



ISTOCK/VEJAA

**Before you recycle, take steps to protect yourself and others from harm.**

- Wipe your data. Just as you should always shred documents containing personal info before recycling them, you should erase all data from an electronic device before getting rid of it.
- Get rid of grime. It's a good idea to sanitize electronic devices before donating them, since many bacteria, viruses and fungi can be transmitted on their outer surfaces. In many cases, all you need is a rag, a few drops of dish soap and some warm water.
- Defuse potential hazards. If you're unloading a device with a built-in battery, first find out if the facility has any additional safety requirements to prevent the battery from starting a fire or exploding.

Sarah Witman is a senior staff writer at Wirecutter, a product recommendation site owned by The New York Times Company. For more advice, visit [nytimes.com/wirecutter](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter).



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# International

The New York Times

*‘The Indonesian cloth we make is alive, it’s speaking, it’s expressing itself about this land.’*



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ULET IFANSASTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE SATURDAY PROFILE JOSEPHINE KOMARA

## A Batik Designer Weaves Modernity Into an Ancient Tradition

By HANNAH BEECH

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Josephine Komara was depressed. She had recently divorced. She had moved into a small house. Her business supplying fabric for lampshades was lucrative but unfulfilling. Ms. Komara sipped her wine and smoked a cigarette. She sank to the floor, dipping her hands into two wooden chests filled with antique Indonesian textiles.

In one chest, Ms. Komara recently recalled, were batik designs from the island of Java, in the other elaborate weavings from Indonesia’s outer islands. She swallowed more wine, inhaled clove-scented smoke from an Indonesian cigarette — and considered how to enrich the heritage of a nation of more than 17,000 islands.

Since that melancholic night nearly four decades ago, Ms. Komara has refashioned an ancient art by entwining disparate textile traditions with an aesthetic all her own to create a modern Indonesian silhouette. Her batik and other designs for her fashion house, BINhouse, have transformed a cultural expression that was intricate and lovely but so locked in tradition that it bordered on staid.

Ms. Komara, known by her nickname Obin, no longer depends on lampshades for a living as BINhouse has become a global force in spreading batik’s beauty.

“I don’t love Indonesia. I am in love with Indonesia,” Ms. Komara said, lingering on the “in” with the throaty fervor of a soap opera actor. “To me, the Indonesian cloth we make is alive, it’s speaking, it’s expressing itself about this land, this beautiful land, which has a certain pulse and aroma that does not exist anywhere else.”

Ms. Komara, 67, speaks as an unabashed Indonesia booster, determined to raise the profile of the world’s most populous Muslim nation and the biggest archipelagic country on the planet.

Superlatives aside, Ms. Komara’s homeland treads with a light international imprint, despite its more than 275 million people. The country boasts no globally iconic brands. If any part of Indonesia is well known overseas, it is Bali, a Hindu holiday isle, as if Hawaii were to stand in for the entire United States.

While a few words originating from this part of Southeast Asia have taken root in English — rice “paddy,” “gecko” and to run “amok” — “batik” is rare in that it is both a local word and also an expression of Indigenous culture.

In one form of batik-making popular on Java, artisans apply wax to fabric with pointillist precision, dripping the dye-resistant liquid from a narrow copper vessel. The patterns they create abound with nature’s exuberance: intricate blooms, mythical beasts and tropical foliage.

Some of batik’s greatest promoters, as far back as the mid-19th century, were female entrepreneurs. Women tended to dominate the wax-dripping process, too.

In 2009, UNESCO designated Indonesian batik an “intangible cultural her-

itage of humanity.” That recognition is meant to preserve a nation’s cultural legacy, but it can also calcify traditions. And when Ms. Komara turned her attention to batik, it was, despite being woven into Indonesian society, in danger of just that.

The boxy cuts of batik shirts worn by civil servants might have conveniently camouflaged deskbound physiques, but they evoked the fashion of a bygone generation. Much of the cotton used for batik wasn’t grown in Indonesia, blunting the authenticity of the art form. Also constraining were customs that held that certain patterns should be worn only by a privileged few. For instance, a dagger-like diagonal and the solitary wing of a mythical bird were reserved for royals.

Ms. Komara hewed to no such taboos. Along with a few other Indonesian designers, Ms. Komara refashioned the art form without erasing its Indigenous character, said Thomas Murray, a researcher and art dealer who is a main

author of the book “Textiles of Indonesia.” “It’s a cross-cultural, cross-time pollination that is exciting.”

Ms. Komara is ethnically Chinese, part of a minority group that, among many other businesses, designed and produced batik. Chinese Indonesians have suffered from waves of persecution in Indonesia, including murderous paroxysms in the 1960s and 1990s. Many have left the country.

Ms. Komara’s father worked for a travel agency, and he moved his family to Hong Kong when she was 4. She attended Catholic school, but the discipline of the Maryknoll sisters disagreed with her. They called her “impertinent” for questioning how the world could be created in less than seven days, she said.

By her preteen years, Ms. Komara said, she had left school and was roaming the alleys of Hong Kong, with their topless bars luring sailors and congee burbling in diners. She ate at Jimmy’s Kitchen, a European-ish institution with

an emphasis on the -ish, and listened to blind men coax nostalgia from the erhu, a Chinese stringed instrument.

“I was gallivanting,” she said. “I took in all the sights and smells.”

When Ms. Komara was 12, her father died. The family moved back to Jakarta, the Indonesian capital. She gallivanted there, too, particularly in Chinatown, with its warren of antique shops. The occasional violence directed at Chinese Indonesians, who were viewed as monopolizing economic interests, did not frighten her, she said.

Her mother was born the daughter of a Methodist schoolmaster but was orphaned and taken in by a Muslim man who prayed five times a day. When riots threatened as Ms. Komara was growing up, her mother would cook big pots of food as a peace offering.

Indonesia, perched on the so-called ring of fire where tectonic plates collide, has other fault lines too.

“We’re in the land of natural disasters: volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis,

you name it, we’ve got it,” Ms. Komara said. “But we’re also a land of diversity that no single person can understand because you drive a car one hour and people are already speaking another dialect, eating another sauce. You enjoy and absorb.”

Ms. Komara was married to an archaeologist and anthropologist, who helped turn her textile collection into an academic interest and a professional one.

Batik, she learned, was being produced in the 13th century, when the Hindu-Buddhist Majapahit empire ruled an oceanic kingdom from Java, dispatching boats as far away as Madagascar. She collected textiles from across the archipelago and delighted in the rainforest bounty that produced natural dyes.

She befriended old textile makers who worried about the longevity of their craft. She now employs hundreds of artisans for BINhouse, including weavers, batik makers, seamsters and fiber workers.

Some of the finest fabrics BINhouse sells, including batik applied to silk, take more than a year to make by hand and cost thousands of dollars. Traditionally, such handwoven cloth would be part of a woman’s dowry. These textiles should not be cut up, Ms. Komara said, any more than a live body should be dissected. They can be used as decorative wall hangings, shawls or sarongs, which are made from a single piece of cloth.

Ms. Komara’s designs for BINhouse come from disparate inspirations: the imprint a wave leaves on a beach or the halo of light from a streetlamp viewed during one of Jakarta’s many traffic jams. Her palette is tropical.

“As an art historian, I see people who don’t like change at all, but I think we need more people like Obin who understand that textiles are a living tradition,” said Sandra Sardjono, a textile historian who founded the Tracing Patterns Foundation in Berkeley, Calif., to research traditional textile practices.

For half a century, Ms. Komara said, she has been designing and redesigning the kebaya, a fitted blouse worn with a sarong in parts of Southeast Asia. The figure-grazing outfit, in some ways, embodies the syncretic form of Islam that developed in Indonesia, in which an Arabian faith brought by traders blended with animist, Hindu, Buddhist and other influences. For Indonesia’s national carrier, Garuda Indonesia, Ms. Komara created a kebaya uniform for flight attendants.

“It’s the sexiest and most sensual clothing,” Ms. Komara said.

More than 85 percent of Indonesians are Muslim, and in recent years women have begun to embrace conservative dress and the head scarf, called the jilbab in Indonesia. Ms. Komara has expanded her collection to include the current preference for loosefitting tunics and head coverings.

“Tradition is the way we are, and modern is the way we think,” she said. “Every cloth tells a living story.”



Clockwise from top: Ms. Komara with customers at BINhouse in Jakarta, Indonesia; fabrics on display; Ms. Komara with one of her textiles. “It’s a cross-cultural, cross-time pollination,” one author said of her work.



War in Ukraine

# Kremlin Shrugs at Revolt as It Strips Prigozhin’s Holdings

By IVAN NECHEPURENKO and CASSANDRA VINOGRAD

The mercenary rebellion that shook Russia was merely “a minor trouble,” the foreign minister said on Friday, warning the West not to think that President Vladimir V. Putin’s grip on power had weakened, even as the Kremlin continued to move against the leader of the mutiny.

Speaking at a news conference, Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov asserted that Russia would emerge “stronger and more resilient” after the short-lived putsch last Friday and Saturday by Yevgeny V. Prigozhin and his Wagner troops, who have played a vital role in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Mr. Lavrov dismissed the rebellion, which drove an armored column to within 125 miles of Moscow before turning back, as insignificant.

“If someone in the West has doubts about this, then that’s their problem,” he said. He added that the Western nations backing Ukraine were misguided if they hoped that “the facade of the Russian government had cracked.”

The Kremlin has insisted repeatedly that the uprising had no support and the nation was united behind Mr. Putin, who has described the episode as an important test that Russia had emphatically passed. But it is clear that the government is still cleaning up its aftermath.

The fates of two key figures remain unclear: Mr. Prigozhin and Gen. Sergei Surovikin, a top military commander seen as being aligned with Prigozhin. Neither has been heard from publicly since last weekend, their whereabouts have not been confirmed, and it is not clear what degree of freedom, if any, either man still enjoys.

The government of Belarus, Mr. Putin’s closest international ally, said on Tuesday that Mr. Prigozhin had gone into exile there, but there has been no independent corroboration of that. Russian authorities have apparently agreed not to prosecute Mr. Prigozhin or his troops, in return for his decision to stand down last Saturday without a major armed clash.

U.S. officials say that General Surovikin, commander of Russian air forces and formerly commander of the war effort in Ukraine, probably knew in advance about the mutiny, and appears to have been detained. The Russian government has refused to comment. Some pro-war Russian bloggers have reported that he was arrested, while others have denied it.

William J. Burns, the C.I.A. director, called the head of Russia’s

Reporting was contributed by Elian Peltier, Valerie Hopkins, Victoria Kim, Julian E. Barnes, Christoph Koettl, Riley Mellen, Dmitriy Khavin and Gabriela Sá Pessoa.



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ROMAN ROMOKHOV/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

foreign intelligence service after last week’s rebellion to assure the Kremlin the U.S. had no involvement, according to a U.S. official, one of several contacts delivering that message. The C.I.A. declined to comment on Mr. Burns’s call, which was earlier reported by The Wall Street Journal.

The Biden administration has taken pains to emphasize to Russian officials that it had no hand in the uprising, and views it as an internal Russian matter. In public comments, Mr. Lavrov has appeared to accept those explanations.

Russia’s state media regulator has blocked a news website controlled by Mr. Prigozhin, and on Friday, a Russian newspaper, Kommersant, reported that several others had been blocked as

well. Russian security services have reportedly raided the offices of other Prigozhin holdings.

Mr. Putin, whose government had long denied any connection to Wagner — as did Mr. Prigozhin until last year — admitted this week that Kremlin contracts had supported the private army. He said there would be an investigation of those contracts to punish graft and profiteering.

The Kremlin has moved this week to take control of Wagner mercenary forces in other countries, including Syria and the Central African Republic, where they have formed the brutal spear point of Russian support for repressive governments, often while securing lucrative concessions in natural resources. Russian diplomats have rushed to as-

sure their allies of continued Wagner backing.

John F. Kirby, spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council, said on Friday that Wagner, working for the military junta that rules Mali, had engineered the departure of a United Nations peacekeeping force in that country to further its own business interests. Weeks ago, the junta asked the peacekeepers to leave “without delay,” and on Friday, the U.N. Security Council voted to withdraw them.

It is unclear what will become of Wagner troops who have been fighting in Ukraine, an important part of the Russian war effort that has given Mr. Prigozhin a robust following in Russia. They have been ordered to sign contracts by Saturday with the Defense Min-

The Russian foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, center, dismissed the impact of the Wagner mercenary group’s aborted march toward Moscow. Wagner soldiers will not be prosecuted and have been absorbed by the Russian military.

istry, putting them under the control of the regular Russian military, if they are to remain part of the war.

That order spelled the end of Wagner as an independent force in Ukraine, weakened Mr. Prigozhin as a political force, and showed that he had lost his long-running power struggle against the leaders of Russia’s military establishment. He said it also prompted his rebellion, which he insisted was aimed at those military leaders, not at Mr. Putin.

President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko of Belarus said this week that he would be willing to take in Wagner fighters who are unwilling to join the Russian military, and offered them an abandoned military base. But it is unknown how many will accept the offer.

New satellite imagery from Thursday and Friday, analyzed by The New York Times, shows more than 250 tents, enough to house thousands of troops, have been erected in the past five days at an unused base. The Times first reported on Wednesday on rapid construction there. The images show no sign so far of a major troop presence.

The relocation of Wagner fighters to Belarus could create a new threat to Ukraine on its northern border, and President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday ordered defenses there strengthened.

# Athlete Spied For Moscow, Poland Says

By CORA ENGELBRECHT

Poland said on Friday that it had detained a professional athlete on charges of spying for the Russian government, in the 14th arrest stemming from the dismantling of what the authorities say was a Russian spy ring that aimed to sabotage arms shipments to Ukraine.

Polish prosecutors said in a statement that the athlete, a Russian citizen, was connected to a network that “conducted intelligence and propaganda activities against Poland and prepared acts of sabotage” for Russia. They did not name the suspect, though Polish news sources reported that he was a professional hockey player.

“Russian spies are falling one by one!” said Poland’s justice minister, Zbigniew Ziobro, in a Twitter post on Friday. “A spy who operated under the guise of a sportsman has been captured.”

Officials said the athlete was facing espionage charges punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

In March, Polish prosecutors detained nine foreigners who were accused of spying for Russia and plotting to sabotage Polish infrastructure used to transport Western arms into Ukraine.

Poland, a NATO member and one of Europe’s staunchest supporters of Ukraine, has been a vital transit point for weapons and ammunition provided by Western countries to help Ukraine defend itself against Russia’s invasion. The presence in Poland of a Russian spy ring trying to damage its infrastructure would signal a risky escalation by Moscow, which has so far avoided striking at targets inside alliance territory.

The Kremlin’s spokesman, Dmitri S. Peskov, on Friday suggested that Moscow’s embassy in Poland would “clear things up.”

Prosecutors said that the suspect, who arrived in Poland in 2021, was paid to carry out “activities involving, among other, identifying critical infrastructure” in several provinces.

Polish news media reported that he played with the national hockey team, Zagłębie Sosnowiec.

The team’s coach, Grzegorz Klich, confirmed that the player was arrested earlier this month, but that he had signed to play with the team before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

“We did not have any suspicions against him before that,” he was quoted as saying in an interview published Friday in Fakt, a Polish tabloid. “He behaved normally. That’s why we are surprised by this case.”

Polish intelligence officers said they detained the player in the province of Silesia, southern Poland.

Anatol Magdziarz contributed reporting.

# A Human Rights Group Accuses Ukraine Troops of Using Prohibited Land Mines

By JOHN ISMAY

WASHINGTON — Ukrainian soldiers fired artillery rockets containing antipersonnel land mines into a Russian-controlled area of eastern Ukraine last year in apparent violation of international agreements banning the use of such weapons, a leading human rights group said in a report released Friday.

The group, Human Rights Watch, called the mines “inherently indiscriminate weapons” because of their inability to distinguish enemy soldiers from non-combatants. It urged the Ukrainian government to “act on its expressed commitment not to use banned antipersonnel land mines, investigate the military’s use of these weapons, and hold those responsible to account.”

Human Rights Watch has issued several reports about land mine use by Russian and Ukrainian forces since Moscow’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Russian troops have used at least 13 kinds of antipersonnel mines “in multiple areas across Ukraine” that have killed and injured civilians, according to the group.

The Ukrainian government promised to investigate the allegations against its soldiers during a June 21 meeting in Geneva of nations that have signed the treaty banning the use of the mines, the group said. Officials at Ukraine’s Defense Ministry in Kyiv and at its embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In 1997, more than 100 countries agreed not to use or maintain stockpiles of antipersonnel land mines, small explosive weapons that are typically buried just below the ground’s surface. When stepped on, they detonate with enough force to blow off a person’s leg.

Injuries from mines of this kind can also be fatal.



IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ukrainian soldiers firing on Russian positions in eastern Ukraine in May 2022. Both sides have been accused of using illegal mines.

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which monitors treaty compliance and collects data on land mine contamination, said that in 2021 at least 5,544 people had been injured or killed by mines around the world. Most of those casualties were civilians, the report said, half of whom were children.

Ukraine signed the agreement, often called the Mine Ban Treaty, in 1999 and ratified it in 2005. The

United States and Russia have refused to join the pact.

In 2014, the Obama administration affirmed a Clinton-era policy stating that the Pentagon would use antipersonnel mines only on the Korean Peninsula, but the Trump administration overturned that directive in 2020, citing a new focus on strategic competition with major powers. The Biden administration returned to the Obama-era policy in June 2022.

Russian and Ukrainian troops have also widely used anti-tank land mines, which are much larger than antipersonnel land mines and are typically designed to explode only when hundreds of pounds of pressure are applied — such as when a truck or an armored vehicle drives over one. These devices generally are not banned under international law.

In April, the Pentagon announced it was sending 1960s-era

M21 anti-tank mines to Ukraine. Washington has also sent Ukraine more than 14,000 155-millimeter artillery shells called RAAMS, for Remote Anti-Armor Mine System, which break open midair and release nine small puck-like munitions that fall to the ground unguided. Each small mine contains a magnetic sensor that causes it to explode when a vehicle approaches and is designed to self-destruct after a couple days.

Human Rights Watch said it had recovered evidence in May from areas of eastern Ukraine formerly held by Russian troops indicating that Ukrainian soldiers had fired Russian-made artillery rockets there that each contained 312 small PFM-1 mines. Often referred to as a “butterfly” mine because of its shape, the PFM-1 is believed to be a copy of a mine used by U.S. troops in Vietnam that was made with a plastic case to make it more difficult to find with metal detectors.

Human Rights Watch said it

Civilians are just as likely to be killed or hurt as combatants.

had found 15 photos on social media posted last autumn showing Russian-made rockets bearing handwritten messages in Ukrainian, which the group said it believed were tied to two fund-raising efforts wherein donors could have a personal message written onto a weapon that would be fired at Russian forces.

Remnants of one rocket warhead that Human Rights Watch later discovered in mined areas bore the same message handwritten in Ukrainian.

The group has released a series of reports since the war began describing evidence of Russian behavior that it says constitutes war crimes. One published shortly after the invasion detailed instances of Russian troops raping and killing Ukrainian civilians and committing other instances of unlawful violence.

Another report, released in July, accused Russian soldiers of torturing and beating civilians in southern Ukraine.



War in Ukraine



Waiting for aid in Avdiivka, Ukraine, top. By March, only about 1,700 people remained in the town, from a prewar population of about 30,000. They are exposed to constant shelling. Above, Tetiana, 67, who worked at the Avdiivka Coke and Chemical Plant for 19 years, now shelters in the factory’s basement.

# IN RUINED TOWN, RESOLVED TO STAY ‘UNTIL THE END’

Photographs by TYLER HICKS, Article by MEGAN SPECIA and GAËLLE GIRBES

AVDIIVKA, Ukraine — In the town of Avdiivka, in eastern Ukraine, the near-constant Russian shelling has reduced the city to rubble.

In recent weeks, the assaults have only intensified. By March, only around 1,700 people remained from a prewar population of about 30,000.

Life is precarious. Because of the danger, other civilians have been barred from entering the town, and public workers and children have been given mandatory evacuation orders.

Still, those who remain insist they will stay, moving underground as the bombardments claim yet another piece of their homes.

Once a bedroom community for the nearby city of Donetsk, Avdiivka has long stood at the front line of war.

Beginning in 2014, Ukraine’s fight against Russian-backed separatists played out on their doorsteps as the town became a key defensive position for Ukrainian forces. When the full-scale Russian invasion began in February last year, Avdiivka came under heavy assault.

Serhiy Albertovych, 63, stepped carefully across the rubble on the ground floor of the apartment building he calls home. It was bombed in March 2022 and again one year later.

“People used to live here, but they left,” he said. “Today, I’m the only inhabitant of the street.”

He dried moldering bread on the floor in one of the apartments in an attempt to be able to eat it.

He was offered an evacuation but turned it down.

“I’m here alone and I’ll be here until the end, until the end of my life,” he said.

Russian forces have been trying to seize Avdiivka for more than a year, blasting it with artillery strikes and testing the perimeters. In the nine years since war first came here, the area around Avdiivka has become something of a labyrinth of defensive positions.

As Russian troops continue to put pressure on the town’s perimeters, Ukrainian forces have dug in to resist their advance. The fighting remains fierce. On Thursday, military officials said that Russians had attacked in the area using tanks, multiple rocket launchers and artillery. Ukrainian troops had held their positions, they said.

But within what remains of the town, there is another network forged by the last holdouts.

Igor Golotov, 40, has been living in the ruins of the town and volunteering to help other inhabitants survive.

“When they started shelling the city, many people immediately packed up and left,” Mr. Golotov said. “Those who, as they say, had patience, fearlessness, over time it disappeared, as well.”

But, he said, many simply would not leave. They have no money and no idea where to go. It took considerable convincing to encourage his own mother to leave the city. But eventually, she relocated to the relative safety of Vinnytsia, in central Ukraine.

Still, he is amazed at the resilience of the people who have chosen to stay.

“I’m telling you, people have adapted to everything,” Mr. Golotov said. “They have settled down, they are leading their lives. If only there was no shelling — they have everything, they have their everyday life.”

Inna, 57, who did not give her last name, chose to stay behind after her husband and her children were evacuated to care for her father, who is older and sick. He refused to leave, she said. Tears crept into her eyes when she spoke of her children.

At the city’s heart is the once-thriving Avdiivka Coke and Chemical Plant, one of the largest producers of coke, a coal-based fuel, in Europe.

The industrial product is important to steel production, and before the war, more than 4,000 people worked at the plant, which produced 12,000 tons of coke per day.

Now, heavily damaged by Russian aerial assaults, the plant is no longer operational. The furnaces that once blazed have been shut down. A small crew of workers remains for basic maintenance, but it is unknown if the plant will ever be able to reopen.

Many who stayed are former workers at the plant, and some of them are now taking shelter in the basement of the spectral industrial space.

Dr. Mykhailo Orlov, 65, is one of just two doctors who remain in the city’s hospital.

“It’s very difficult when there are a lot of injured people, and we don’t have enough staff to help them all at once,” he said. “And everyone does what they can.”

The mining company Metinvest, which owns the main factory and provides aid to the town, regularly sends medicine and other supplies to the hospital. “Whatever we need, we make a list and send it,” Dr. Orlov said. “That way, for three to four months, we have everything we need.”

It is not just injuries from the conflict. The hospital treats older patients with diabetes and other chronic illnesses. “Everyone comes here, and we try to help everyone as much as we can,” Dr. Orlov said.

On a recent morning, a woman injured in an artillery attack was helped to the hospital by her son and a neighbor. Her son looked on while Dr. Orlov stabilized the patient for a potential evacuation to the hospital in Pokrovsk, nearly 40 miles away.

Dr. Orlov’s apartment was destroyed, so he lives in the hospital and sleeps only when there are no patients.

“I have to be useful here,” he said. “I’m staying here because it’s my little homeland.”



Top, Serhiy Albertovych, 63, in the rubble of his apartment building, where he still lives. He is the only resident left on his street. Above, outside Avdiivka, the 110th Separate Mechanized Brigade fired on Russian positions.

Gaëlle Girbes reported from Avdiivka, Ukraine, and Megan Specia from Kyiv, Ukraine. Dmitriy Yatsenko contributed reporting from Avdiivka.





Clockwise from left, an abandoned playground; inside a shelter; and Edward, 41, whose apartment building was destroyed by a Russian airstrike. He said that during the attack he was in his kitchen, the only room in his apartment still standing.



# Bracing for More Unrest, Macron Urges Parents to Keep Youths at Home

**By AURELIEN BREEDEN**

PARIS — President Emmanuel Macron of France urgently appealed to parents on Friday as the country braced for another night of unrest over the fatal police shooting of a 17-year-old, with French officials saying that the protests were driven mostly by angry young people and coordinated on social media.

Mr. Macron's government is struggling to contain the rage unleashed by the killing, in which a police officer fatally shot a teenage driver during a traffic stop in Nanterre, west of Paris, on Tuesday. Anger over the shooting tapped into decades-long complaints about police violence and persistent feelings of neglect and racial discrimination in France's poorer urban suburbs.

Speaking at the end of a crisis cabinet meeting in Paris — the second this week — Mr. Macron called the violence “unjustifiable” and said it had “no legitimacy whatsoever.”

“There is an unacceptable manipulation of a teenager's death,” said Mr. Macron, who had taken the rare step of leaving early from a European Union summit in Brussels to attend the crisis meeting.

A third of those arrested overnight were “young, sometimes very young,” Mr. Macron said. “It is the parents's responsibility to keep them at home.”

Over 800 people were arrested over Thursday night after protesters burned 2,000 cars, damaged nearly 500 buildings, looted stores and clashed with riot police officers in Nanterre and dozens of cities around France, according to the Interior Ministry. In Marseille, two plainclothes police officers were badly beaten, according to *Gérald Darmanin*, the French interior minister.

Several cities, like Strasbourg, experienced sporadic daytime vandalism and looting of stores in their city centers on Friday afternoon and evening — a departure from previous days, when the protests were almost exclusively in suburbs. Some protests in Marseille turned particularly violent on Friday evening, as rioters overturned and burned cars.

Now, the country is bracing for a potential fourth night of chaotic protests.

Late-night bus and tram services were halted around the country, since public transportation has been targeted over the past days. Authorities in several cities also canceled large events that had been planned over the next few days, including concerts at the Stade de France, north of Paris. Some cities have started banning local protests or enforcing nighttime curfews, and the government said on Friday evening that it was deploying 45,000 law enforcement officers across the country, as well as some armored vehicles.

“We are going to stop this unrest,” Mr. Darmanin told the TF1 television channel, adding that a “vast majority” of residents in the working-class neighborhoods struck by the violence had “nothing to do with several hundred or several thousand delinquents.”



CHRISTOPHE SIMON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

The officer who fired the shot has been detained and placed under formal investigation on charges of voluntary homicide — a rare step in criminal cases involving police officers.

“I'm not angry at the police,” the mother of the shooting victim said on Thursday in an interview with France 5 television. “I'm angry at a person — the one who took my son's life.”

The swift charges against the officer and the government's expression of support for the teenager's family have done little to calm tensions. Many of the protesters identify with the victim, a French citizen of North African descent who has been publicly identified only as Nahel M.

The charge under which the officer who fired the fatal shot is being investigated is punishable by up to 30 years in prison. Yet although the initial charge and detention were swift, a quick legal outcome is unlikely.

In France, defendants in the most serious criminal cases can be kept in pretrial detention for up to three years. They can appeal their detention or be granted conditional release, however, and it is unclear how long the officer, who has not been identified, will remain in custody. Police unions have argued that he is not a flight risk.

Complex criminal cases in France are handled by special magistrates with broad investigative powers, who place defend-



LEWIS JOLY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

ants under formal investigation when they believe the evidence points to serious wrongdoing. But the magistrates can later change the charges, or even drop them, if they do not believe they have sufficient evidence to proceed to trial.

That leaves open the possibility of an extended period of violent protests, including over the weekend. Patrick Jarry, the mayor of Nanterre, said that Nahel M.'s funeral would be held on Saturday.

On Thursday night, a school was set ablaze in the northern city of Lille, police officers were targeted with fireworks in the suburbs of Lyon, and protesters rammed a supermarket with a car in Nantes. A handful of stores were also vandalized and looted in Paris itself, which had previously

experienced little unrest over the shooting. In many cities, young people threw firecrackers or shot fireworks at riot police officers, who responded with tear gas.

In Évry-Courcouronnes, a suburb south of Paris, police officers told Prime Minister *Élisabeth Borne* in front of television cameras that they had struggled to counter the sporadic and unpredictable unrest, which often involved small, highly mobile groups.

Asked whether the government was considering declaring a state of emergency in some areas, Ms. Borne said: “We are examining all options.” So far, though, the government has ruled out that emergency provision, which would allow the authorities to impose cur-

few, ban demonstrations and put people under house arrest with little judicial oversight.

Looming large is the memory of 2005, when the government declared a state of emergency to quell weeks of violent riots after the death of two teenagers fleeing the police in Clichy-sous-Bois, an impoverished northeastern suburb of Paris.

But *Driss Ettazaoui*, a deputy mayor in *Évreux*, a town in Normandy where protesters have set fire to an official building and to several schools over the past few days, said that the protesters this week were far younger than they were in 2005.

“Before, it was young people, ages 18 to 25, and now it's 12 to 16,” he said. “And that's very worrying.”

Mr. Ettazaoui, who is also vice president of an association of urban mayors, said a key issue in disenfranchised urban neighborhoods was the prevalence of families with single parents who often work long hours and struggle to keep an eye on their children, as ubiquitous smartphones and social media apps drive protests like “an accelerator.”

At the crisis meeting, Mr. Macron said that social networks had played a “considerable role” in helping protesters organize quickly, and in facilitating a “mimicry of violence” among young people that led to “a kind of escape from reality.”

In response, French ministers met with representatives from Meta, Twitter, Snapchat and TikTok on Friday to urge them to more swiftly remove hateful or violent content that is illegal under French law.

But the government has also ramped up the deployment of security forces, using helicopters and elite police units in some places to better track and contain the unrest.

Some of the worst violence on Thursday night was concentrated in the Île-de-France region, whose president, *Valérie Pécresse*, said on Friday that she would push through an emergency fund of 20 million euros, or about \$21.8 million, to help cities rebuild.

In Montreuil, an eastern suburb of Paris, protesters smashed the windows of businesses and looted them. In Aubervilliers, a northern suburb, charred metal carcasses were all that remained of a dozen buses after protesters broke into a depot and set them on fire.

“They are damaging and destroying their own environment,” Mr. Ettazaoui said. “It's going to take a long time to recover from these new riots.”

## French Police Had ‘No Training Whatsoever’ on When They’re Able to Shoot

*From Page A1*

fully inadequate.

“We received no training whatsoever,” Mr. Lagache said. He and other police officers interviewed in the weeks and months before this most recent fatal shooting said their classes had been mostly online — video tutorials showing the situations in which police officers may or may not shoot — and covered theoretical topics that failed to capture the realities of the field.

“We still have colleagues today who open fire because they're convinced that they're protected under the law, when they're not,” said *Yves Lefebvre*, a union leader who helped negotiate the bill. “There's inevitably some collateral damage.”

French police officials did not respond to messages seeking comment on how officers are trained. Union members have an incentive to blame the training, rather than their officers or a law they had supported.

A report last year by the *Cour des Comptes*, France's highest public audit institution, showed that nearly 40 percent of officers failed to comply with a requirement to attend three shooting training sessions. That is separate from the 2017 law and carries no penalties if ignored.

Following the recent shooting, France's interior minister, *Gérald Darmanin*, denied that fatal shootings at fleeing motorists increased following the law's passage, a contention that was refuted by the data compiled by the French researchers.

Policing experts and lawyers say the law and the spate of police shootings that followed are the unintended consequences of the French government's response to terrorism and to an increase in threats against police officers.

“The law was passed to achieve expected effects,” said *Marie-France Monéger*, the former head of a powerful police body that investigates police forces, referring to battling terrorism. “Then you have the unexpected effects and then you have the perverse effects.”

Suicide bombings in Paris in 2015, a deadly truck attack in Nice in 2016 and a firebombing that seriously wounded two police officers that year in suburban Paris prompted calls for tougher security. The bill, which also allowed officers to shoot at fleeing suspects deemed a danger, passed with an overwhelming majority in February 2017.

But firing on moving or speeding cars is a tactic that many cities have banned as too dangerous.

New York Police Department officers, for example, have been generally prohibited from firing at cars since 1972.

“What France is doing is in many ways an anomaly,” said *Chuck Wexler*, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, a group in Washington whose members are police executives from major city, county and state forces.

In the past, French police officers were allowed to fire on vehicles only when the officers were in immediate danger, the same right of self-defense as any citizen. Police unions, a powerful political force in France, argued, though, that they should have broader authority to fight crime and rules that matched those of the *gendarmerie*, a French police force with

military status.

Now, police officers can fire when they believe that motorists are likely to endanger lives while fleeing. Officers, the law says, may use their weapons in cases of “absolute necessity and in a strictly proportionate manner.”

*Catherine Tutziano*, a University of Toulon law professor, said the law's wording “suggests that officers can use their weapons more easily.”

The bill drew heavy criticism from France's defender of rights, an independent government ombudsman who monitors civil rights, and the National Advisory Committee on Human Rights, a United Nations-affiliated group that advises the French government. Both warned that the law's vague wording might lead to more

fatal shootings.

Those shootings increased almost immediately after it went into effect. In the first nine months, police officers shot and killed five motorists, more than in the five years before the law.

“In 2017, the wrong message was sent. We said, ‘Now, you can shoot at cars,’” *Laurent-Francis Liénard*, a lawyer who is defending most of the 13 police officers involved in last year's fatal traffic stops, said in an interview in February. He said most officers involved were young recruits in their mid-20s who received limited shooting training.

Mr. Liénard said the officer involved in this week's shooting, whom he also represents, “shot within the framework of the law.” That officer has not been identified publicly.

The rising trend in fatal traffic stops since 2017 “is really a big issue, which has probably made France the European champion for lethal shootings on vehicles,” said *Sebastian Roché*, a policing expert at the country's National Center for Scientific Research, who compiled the data and shared it with The Times.

A research paper on the topic is under peer review by an American journal, he said, adding that the underlying figures on shootings and traffic stops come from the French police.

On average, France has recorded one fatal shooting every two and a half months since the law passed, compared with one every 16 months before the law — a sixfold increase.

French authorities and police unions have argued that this surge is driven mostly by a growing number of drivers who refuse to stop and endanger the lives of others. The number of such dangerous refusals to stop recorded by the police doubled from 2012 to 2021, according to official police

data.

But that does not explain the sixfold increase in the rate of shootings.

The researchers also ruled out that the surge could be attributed to an overall rise in crime. They noted that, unlike with the French national police, the number of fatal traffic stops had barely increased in the *gendarmerie*, the French military police force, and in the police forces of Belgium and Germany, two countries with relatively similar homicide rates to France.

“There's no doubt about it,” Mr. Roché said. “The 2017 law giving more powers to the police is the cause of the increase in fatal police shootings.”

It remains unclear what training the officer involved in Tuesday's killing had received. In a video of the incident, the officer can be seen on the driver's side of a car, pointing a gun into the vehicle. When the car started to pull away, he shot the driver, who was pronounced dead an hour later. The police have identified him only as Nahel M., a 17-year-old French citizen of Algerian and Moroccan descent.

A French prosecutor said on Thursday that, even under the 2017 law's provisions, the officer had not met the legal standard to open fire. The officer was placed under formal investigation on charges of “voluntary homicide.”

Prominent politicians called for a review of the law. And an editorial in *Le Monde*, one of France's leading newspapers, called for changes to the law.

“How can a problem that arose in 2017 and has since been confirmed by the facts every year be addressed politically only today,” said *Marine Tondelier*, the head of the French Greens, “just because a 17-year-old boy died and we have a video.”



THOMAS COEX/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Some say a rushed response to terrorism may have caused a spike in fatal police-involved shootings.



## NEWS ANALYSIS

# Killing Splits France Into Rival Camps

By ROGER COHEN

PARIS — President Emmanuel Macron has often denounced a new “incivility” in France and called for mutual respect. But the deadly shooting of a teenager of Algerian-Moroccan descent by a police officer has only deepened the discord, as the government scrambles to contain the violent fallout from viral images of the death of Nahel M.

The broad initial denunciation of the shooting on Tuesday morning, including Mr. Macron’s description of it as “inexcusable,” has given way, as violence has mounted, to tribal expressions of allegiance, whether to a law-and-order camp or to a movement of those who see ethnic profiling and racism in a pattern of police killings or manhandling of minorities.

The fatal confrontation during a traffic stop in the western suburb of Nanterre has become a kind of Rorschach test of a divided French society. Whatever French people see in the ink blots seems to be increasingly ugly and irreconcilable.

In a statement on Friday, Alliance Police Nationale, the largest police union, denounced the “savage hordes” and “vermin” behind the burning of 2,000 cars and the looting of several stores in riots on Thursday night that led to the arrests of over 800 people. Another police union, Unsa, joined Alliance in what it said was a call to “combat” in a “war” that “the government must take account of.”

Left-wing lawmakers denounced the police statement as a call to civil war and a threat of sedition. “Those who want calm should not throw oil on the fire,” Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leader of the far-left France Unbowed movement, said.

Mr. Macron, after a second crisis cabinet meeting this week, said the violence had “no legitimacy,” was fed by social media and involved copycat violence from young people playing video games that had “intoxicated” them. “It’s the responsibility of parents to keep them at home,” he said. “It’s not the state’s job to act in their place.”

The gathering protests over three nights have reflected widespread rage, especially among young people from low-income immigrant communities, at a shooting they see as reflecting endemic racism in France’s law enforcement agencies. Gérard Darmanin, the interior minister, announced that 45,000 police officers and gendarmes would be deployed Friday night.

“I was shocked but in the end not that much,” said Ilham Ksiyer, a 28-year-old medical student as he waited for a bus in Nanterre.

Olivier Klein, the housing minister, told BFMTV on Friday that “there is this persistent resentment with a certain number of young people who feel forgotten.”

His words carried particular weight. Mr. Klein is the former mayor of the impoverished suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois, where Zyed Benna, 17, and Bouna Traoré, 15, were electrocuted in 2005 as they were pursued by police officers.

Since then, 18 years of intermittent French troubles have elapsed. Poor schools, drugs, delinquency and dismal prospects in the suburbs where many French Algerians and other minorities live have fed a festering resentment that does not seem to abate, whatever the improvements state investments have brought.

“It’s blown up in my neighborhood,” said Roman Challe, 20, who is studying to be a roofer and said he lived near Nahel. “They shouldn’t burn schools, though, but police stations. When they burn schools it’s kids that suffer.”

The president, who is scheduled to leave for a two-day state visit to Germany on Sunday, needs to restore order fast enough to avoid a declaration of a state of emergency that would

be seen as an admission that his government has lost control of the situation.

The police have been angered by the swift and indefinite detention of the officer who fired the shot and a prosecutor’s decision to place him under investigation on charges of voluntary homicide. They and several right-wing leaders have seen a rush to judgment.

“It is evident that the death of a young man can leave absolutely nobody indifferent,” said Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Rally party and a perennial presidential candidate. “But I am astonished that the president of the Republic does not leave the judicial system the time to do its work.”

Stéphane Séjourné, the leader of Mr. Macron’s Renaissance party, which is the largest in Parliament but does not have an absolute majority, issued a statement that appeared to reflect the resolute posture against violent protesters now adopted by the government, after its initial outrage at the shooting.

Mr. Séjourné attacked the left for refusing to condemn the violence, accusing them of fomenting hatred. But David Guiraud, a lawmaker with France Unbowed, said in a Tweet: “I do not call for calm, I call for justice. The people who live in troubled neighborhoods know. They know that without the video, the police would have lied, and nothing would have happened.”

There were 13 fatal shootings during traffic stops in 2022, the highest number recorded in a single year, but so far none has led to any convictions.

Mr. Macron’s office disputed the notion that the violence was the direct result of widespread social anger.

“These are not neighborhoods that were abandoned and that are rising up,” said an official from the French presidency, who in keeping with French rules could not be publicly identified. “The residents of these neighborhoods are the first victims” of violence caused by a minority, the official said.

Mr. Macron’s office pointed to his policies that aim to reduce inequalities — like splitting up overcrowded classes in schools in disenfranchised neighborhoods, which his government did during his first term, or guaranteeing that middle schools in those areas stay open later to help struggling students, a promise that he made just this week in Marseille.

But, the official acknowledged, “We have a lot of catching up to do.”

Nahel, a fan of rap and motorbikes, was raised alone by his mother in Nanterre. He had a few minor run-ins with the police involving reckless driving and failure to comply with traffic stops, but had recently joined an association called “Ovale Citoyen” that helps youths from difficult backgrounds through involvement in sport — in this case rugby.

“For me, Nahel was an example of a kid from an underprivileged neighborhood, unschooled, sometimes borderline but in no way a big-time bandit, who really wanted to make his way,” Jeff Puech, the president of the association, told the Sud Ouest daily.

For Mr. Macron, Nahel’s death has come at an awkward moment. As a wave of protests against his decision to raise the retirement age began to die down in April, he promised that within 100 days he would galvanize France through a series of measures, including tax cuts for the middle class and massive investment in vocational schools. Those 100 days will be up on July 14, Bastille Day, the French national holiday.

Perhaps France’s divisions are now just too deep, and the resentment toward Mr. Macron from those left behind in France too acute, for healing to be possible. When the president tried this week, even before the shooting, to tell people in La Busserine, a poor northern suburb of Marseille, about his revival program for the city, some shouted him down.



DOUGLAS MAGNO/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Former President Jair Bolsonaro on Friday, after Brazil’s electoral court barred him from seeking public office again for seven years.

## Brazil Bars Bolsonaro From Office for Fraud Claims

By JACK NICAS

Brazilian election officials on Friday blocked former President Jair Bolsonaro from seeking public office until 2030, removing a top contender from the next presidential contest and dealing a significant blow to the country’s far-right movement.

Brazil’s electoral court ruled that Mr. Bolsonaro had violated Brazil’s election laws when, less than three months before last year’s vote, he called diplomats to the presidential palace and made baseless claims that the nation’s voting systems were likely to be rigged against him.

Five of the court’s seven judges voted that Mr. Bolsonaro had abused his power as president when he convened the meeting with diplomats and broadcast it on state television.

“This response will confirm our faith in the democracy,” said Alexandre de Moraes, a Supreme Court justice who leads the electoral court, as he cast his vote against Mr. Bolsonaro.

The decision is a sharp rebuke of Mr. Bolsonaro and his effort to undermine Brazil’s elections. Just six months ago, Mr. Bolsonaro was president of one of the world’s largest democracies. Now his career as a politician is in jeopardy.

Under the ruling, Mr. Bolsonaro, 68, will next be able to run for president in 2030, when he is 75. The next presidential election is scheduled for 2026.

Mr. Bolsonaro said Friday that he was not surprised by the 5-to-2 decision because the court had always been against him. “Come on. We know that since I took office they said I was going to carry out a coup,” he told reporters (though he, too, had hinted at that possibility). “This is not democracy.”

His lawyers had argued that his speech to diplomats was an “act of government” aimed at raising legitimate concerns about election security.

Mr. Bolsonaro appeared to accept his fate, saying Friday that he

was not surprised by the 5-to-2 decision because the court had always been against him. “Come on. We know that since I took office they said I was going to carry out a coup,” he told reporters (though he, too, had hinted at that possibility). “This is not democracy.”

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would focus on campaigning for other right-wing candidates.

Yet he is still expected to appeal the ruling to Brazil’s Supreme Court, though that body acted aggressively to rein in his power during his presidency. He has attacked the high court for years, calling some justices “terrorists” and accusing them of trying to sway the vote against him.

Even if an appeal is successful, Mr. Bolsonaro would face another 15 cases in the electoral court, including accusations that he improperly used public funds to influence the vote and that his campaign ran a coordinated misinformation campaign. Any of those cases could also block him from

### The electoral court rules that he abused his presidential power.

seeking the presidency.

He is also linked to several criminal investigations, involving whether he provoked his supporters to storm Brazil’s halls of power on Jan. 8 and whether he was involved in a scheme to falsify his vaccine records. (Mr. Bolsonaro has declined the Covid-19 vaccine.) A conviction in any criminal case would also render him ineligible for office, in addition to carrying possible prison time.

Mr. Bolsonaro was a shock to Brazil’s politics when he was elected president in 2018. A former Army captain and fringe far-right congressman, he rode a populist wave to the presidency on an anti-corruption campaign.

His lone term was marked by controversy from the start, including a sharp rise in deforestation in the Amazon rainforest, a hands-off approach to the pandemic that left nearly 700,000 dead in Brazil and harsh attacks against the press, the judiciary and the left.

But it was his repeated broadsides against Brazil’s voting systems that alarmed many Brazilians, as well as the international

community, stoking worries that he might try to hold on to power if he lost last October’s election.

Mr. Bolsonaro did lose by a slim margin and at first refused to concede. Under pressure from allies and rivals, he eventually agreed to a transition to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Yet, after listening to Mr. Bolsonaro’s false claims for years, many Bolsonaro supporters remained convinced that Mr. Lula, a leftist, had stolen the election. On Jan. 8, a week after Mr. Lula took office, thousands of people stormed Brazil’s Congress, Supreme Court and presidential offices, hoping to induce the military to take over the government and restore Mr. Bolsonaro as president.

Since then, more evidence has emerged that at least some members of Mr. Bolsonaro’s inner circle were entertaining ideas of a coup. Brazil’s federal police found separate drafts of plans for Mr. Bolsonaro to hold on to power at the home of Mr. Bolsonaro’s justice minister and on the phone of his former assistant.

Mr. Bolsonaro’s attacks on the voting system and the Jan. 8 riot in Brazil bore a striking resemblance to former President Donald J. Trump’s denials that he lost the 2020 election and the Jan. 6, 2021, storming of the U.S. Capitol.

The ruling against Mr. Bolsonaro upends politics in Latin America’s largest nation. For years, he has pulled Brazil’s conservative movement further to the right with harsh rhetoric against rivals, skepticism of science, a love of guns and an embrace of the culture wars.

He received 49.1 percent of the vote in the 2022 election, just 2.1 million votes behind Mr. Lula, in the nation’s closest presidential contest since it returned to democracy in 1985, following a military dictatorship.

Yet conservative leaders in Brazil, with an eye toward Mr. Bolsonaro’s legal challenges, have started to move on, touting Tarcísio Gomes de Freitas, the right-wing governor of Brazil’s largest state, São Paulo, as the new standard-bearer of the right and a 2026

challenger to Mr. Lula.

“He is a much more palatable candidate because he doesn’t have Bolsonaro’s liabilities and because he is making a move to the center,” said Marta Arretche, a political science professor at the University of São Paulo.

The Brazilian press and pollsters have speculated that Mr. Bolsonaro’s wife, Michelle, or two of his sons would run for president. Mr. Bolsonaro said recently that he told Ms. Bolsonaro she doesn’t have the necessary experience, “but she is an excellent campaigner.”

Friday’s decision is also further proof that Mr. Moraes, the head of the electoral court, has become one of Brazil’s most powerful men.

During Mr. Bolsonaro’s administration, Mr. Moraes acted as the most effective check on the president’s power, leading investigations into Mr. Bolsonaro and his allies, jailing some of his supporters for what he viewed as threats against Brazil’s institutions and ordering tech companies to remove the accounts of many other right-wing voices.

Those tactics raised concerns that he was abusing his power, and Mr. Bolsonaro and his supporters have called Mr. Moraes an authoritarian. On the left, he has been praised as the savior of Brazil’s democracy.

Mr. Bolsonaro’s case before the electoral court stemmed from a 47-minute meeting on July 18 in which he called dozens of foreign diplomats to the presidential residence to present what he promised was evidence of fraud in past Brazilian elections.

He made unfounded claims that Brazil’s voting machines changed ballots for him to other candidates in a previous election and that a 2018 hack of the electoral court’s computer network showed the vote could be rigged. But security experts have said the hackers could never gain access to the voting machines or change votes.

The speech was broadcast on the Brazilian government’s television network and its social media channels. Some tech companies later took the video down because it spread election misinformation.

## Afghanistan Exit Report Urges ‘Worst Case’ Thinking

By MICHAEL CROWLEY

WASHINGTON — The State Department should plan better for worst-case scenarios, strengthen its crisis management capabilities and ensure that top officials hear “the broadest possible range of views,” including ones that challenge their assumptions and decisions.

Those were some of the findings of a State Department review of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in the summer of 2021, which contributed to the sudden collapse of the Afghan government and required a massive airlift to rescue roughly 125,000 U.S. citizens and Afghans who had assisted the United States.

The review also portrayed a department that scrambled to respond to the crisis because of unfilled senior positions, unclear leadership on planning efforts and a shortage of seasoned diplomats in Kabul.

The document addresses what even many Democrats call a foreign policy debacle for the Biden administration: its failure to more adequately prepare for the abrupt collapse of the Afghan state and avoid days of chaos in Kabul amid an emergency exit that included a terrorist bombing at the city’s airport that killed as many as 170 civilians and 13 U.S. troops.

Biden officials have long said that few envisioned such a rapid Taliban takeover of the country, that exiting under any circumstances would have been difficult and that the United States made

the right decision to withdraw.

The report does not pin blame on individuals and mentions Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken only in passing. But it does say that in both the Trump and Biden administrations, “there was insufficient senior-level consideration of worst-case scenarios and how quickly those might follow.”

Even after it became clear that the Taliban would capture Kabul, the report says, the department’s response featured confusion about responsibilities and authorities. Under Mr. Blinken, the State Department’s participation in executive branch planning for an evacuation “was hindered by the fact that it was unclear who in the department had the lead,” the report finds.

Another shortcoming: By the time the frantic airlift from Kabul began, top State Department officials “had not made clear decisions” regarding which Afghans would be eligible for evacuation, nor where they would be taken.

It also says that the department “failed” to establish a broad Afghanistan task force as the situation there deteriorated in late July and early August 2021, and that such a step “would have brought key players together to address issues related to a possible” mass evacuations.

At the same time, the 87-page report — less than half of which was publicly released on Friday because much of it is classified — points to several factors largely beyond the Biden administra-

tion’s control to explain the chaos that followed the government’s collapse and does not directly condemn the Biden administration.

It says, as Biden officials have many times before, that the coronavirus pandemic severely limited operations at the U.S. Embassy in the months before the withdrawal, making it difficult to process special visas for Afghans hoping to leave the country before the Taliban’s return. The report also suggests that the Trump administration had committed to withdrawing troops from Afghanistan after a 20-year occupation without planning for how the United States might maintain a diplomatic presence in the country and what to do about the tens of thousands of Afghans who, fearing Taliban reprisals, had applied for those special visas.

The report says its review team “was struck by the differences in style and decision making” between the Trump and Biden administrations, “most notably the relative lack of an interagency process in the Trump administration and the intense interagency process that characterized the initial period of the Biden administration.”

“This included a particular focus very early in the Biden administration on the fate of those eligible” for American visas and assistance, which the report says led to “successful” early steps to address a huge backlog of Afghans who had begun requesting to leave the country. “That move-

ment, however, was still in its early days as Kabul fell to the Taliban,” the reports finds.

The report repeats assertions made by Mr. Blinken and others that few U.S. officials had foreseen how quickly the Afghan military and government would collapse and notes that close observers “apparently including the Taliban itself” agreed.

“That said,” it adds, “as security conditions in Afghanistan deteriorated, some argued for more urgency in planning for a possible collapse.”

In mid-July 2021, nearly two dozen Kabul-based American diplomats sent Mr. Blinken a cable through the department’s “disent” channel urging that evacuation flights for Afghans begin in two weeks and that the administration move faster to register them for visas.

That cable has become a focal point for congressional Republicans critical of the administration’s handling of the withdrawal. Representative Michael McCaul, Republican of Texas and the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, threatened to hold Mr. Blinken in contempt of Congress when he initially refused to provide the memo to his committee.

Mr. Blinken allowed Mr. McCaul to view the document in May but says he will not release it publicly to protect internal discussions within his department.

Mr. Blinken ordered the review shortly after the U.S. exit from Afghanistan.



POOL PHOTO BY YVES HERMAN

President Emmanuel Macron, center, has attended two crisis cabinet meetings this week in the wake of Tuesday’s shooting.



# Holiday Weekend To Give No Break From Heat’s Peril



CALLAGHAN O'HARE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



MATTHEW BUSCH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



JOSEPH RUSHMORE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

By **EMILY COCHRANE** and **JUDSON JONES**

MOBILE, Ala. — When forecasters predicted that oppressive heat would settle over much of the South for days this month, one of the first thoughts for staff members at the Mobile Botanical Gardens was how to protect their most sensitive plants.

But with the prolonged heat stretching into the weekend, their focus has shifted to the safety of the people drawn to the gardens, particularly tourists unfamiliar with the mental and physical toll of the steamy conditions.

“This heat is a different animal,” said Robin Krchak, the gardens’ executive director, who now closes online ticket sales at noon to encourage visitors to come in the relative cool of the mornings. The few

employees and volunteers who keep the gardens humming are arriving earlier or cutting their workloads short to avoid heatstroke and heat stress.

Ahead of a typically busy Fourth of July holiday period, the extreme heat has been an early test in a region already resigned to high temperatures, heavy humidity and long summers. It has strained air-conditioners, heightened the danger of outdoor work and turned some leisure activities into matters of endurance.

Temperatures recorded across the month showed that it was a much hotter June than usual, a pattern that is likely to continue as climate change, driven by human behavior and the continued burning of fossil fuels, contributes to a warming planet.

In the South, oppressive temperatures

The New York Times



CHENEY ORR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



LM OTERO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

## Sweltering Conditions Are Spreading to the West



BRYAN TARNOWSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

People in the South are trying to cope with sizzling heat indexes, which could exceed 110 degrees in some places this weekend.

only to allow time for breaks but also to let his body move more slowly.

To help keep guests cool, staff members carry bottled water and stock more watermelon- and pineapple-flavored ice fruit bars. They are also monitoring the irrigation system and the water levels in the koi pond, in case too much water has evaporated.

And the most heat-sensitive plants, including Max, a decades-old staghorn fern, and a group of orchids, have been moved from a greenhouse perch to a safer, cooler location.

While the heat could match or break seasonal records across the country, in the South, the high humidity will make it especially hard for people to endure.

“It’s a slow transition for the people who live in the Deep South, particularly

the western part of the Deep South, the next few days,” said Jeffrey M. Medlin, a meteorologist instructor at the University of South Alabama who previously spent more than three decades with the National Weather Service. “It’s not just going to happen overnight.”

He urged those residents to pay close attention to the heat index in order to fully gauge the effect of the heat.

In the West, humidity will be lower, but temperatures will be even higher. Central California could reach nearly 110 degrees. In the desert Southwest, temperatures could rise above 110 degrees as the first heat wave of the season takes hold. Coastal regions may see an increase in temperatures, too, but onshore winds should allow cooler conditions to prevail in most locations.

# Rains Will Bring Respite From a Smoky Haze That’s Draped Large Portions of the U.S.

By **CHRISTOPHER MAAG** and **DERRICK BRYSON TAYLOR**

Air quality remained poor in the Northeast on Friday, but conditions were improving across much of the Midwest as rain and winds from the west and south began to disperse wildfire smoke from Canada that had hung over much of the country this week.

Rain and southerly winds were expected to continue across most of the Eastern United States at least through the Fourth of July, clearing the way for fireworks, cookouts and other outdoor activities over the holiday weekend, said David Roth, a forecaster with the federal Weather Prediction Center.

One exception to the general clearing trend may be in Minnesota, where a lack of rainfall means “the smoke will be more persistent there,” Mr. Roth said.

At various times this week, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Columbus, Ohio, all experienced air quality that qualified as “very unhealthy” or “hazardous” according to AirNow.gov, a source for air-quality data run by the Environmental Protection Agency. By Friday afternoon, the skies in all three cities were beginning to clear, with only moderate pollution, according to AirNow.

Conditions were expected to continue to improve across much of the Midwest from Friday night into Saturday as

storms roll in, Mr. Roth said.

“That rain will wash everything out of the air,” he said.

In the Northeast on Friday, unhealthy levels of ozone and small particulates in the air were reported from Wilmington, Del., to Albany, N.Y., according to AirNow. The air was likely to clear as wind from the south pushed any lingering wildfire smoke back to Canada, Mr. Roth said.

The resulting weather pattern should

## Skies start to clear after a week of very unhealthy and hazardous conditions.

keep skies clear of smoke across most of the Northeast into early Wednesday, he added. He cautioned, however, that the location and size of new wildfires could not be accurately predicted, meaning smoke forecasts were good for 24 hours at most.

The gradually improving conditions came after a week during which millions of people in the Great Lakes region, parts of the Midwest, the Northeast and the Mid-Atlantic were forced to cope with smoke that obscured skylines and made it difficult for some to breathe.

Lino Alayo, 42, a landscaper on the Up-

per West Side of Manhattan, began his Friday by checking the air quality level on his phone, followed by three pumps of his asthma inhaler. Aware of the potential health risks, he said he was forcing himself to work more slowly these days. “I just have got to learn how to adapt if this is going to be the new normal,” he said.

John Valentin, 53, a building superintendent who lives and works on the Upper West Side, said he had been gargling with Listerine to soothe the irritation in his throat. He spent Friday cleaning a thin layer of soot from his building’s windowsills, he said, and sealing shut stairwell windows after older tenants complained about the air quality.

Other New Yorkers were less concerned about the conditions. Consuela Agudelo, 77, was waiting for a bus in Queens on Friday morning and, like most people on the street, was not wearing a mask, although she had some in her purse.

“I’m not putting it on because I don’t feel anything,” Ms. Agudelo said. “Also, it’s so hot with a mask on. When I left my house, I could smell the smoke.”

“But it’s not as bad as the first time,” she added, referring to the days earlier this month when wildfire smoke turned the air in New York orange.

In Michigan, the state environmental department extended a statewide air quality advisory into Saturday. In New York, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced that the statewide advisory would end Friday, but that regional advisories would re-



EMON HASSAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

One World Trade Center as seen from the Hudson Path on Manhattan’s West Side. Smoke from Canadian wildfires left a haze across the city.

main in place Saturday for the Adirondacks, the Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island, with air quality remaining dangerous enough to affect sensitive groups. In Minnesota, Maryland and Washington, D.C., health and environmental agencies warned that people with impaired health should continue to take precautions, even as air conditions

improved slowly.

On Friday morning, Mayor Eric Adams of New York City said in an interview with the radio station 1010 WINS that officials had not decided whether Fourth of July fireworks would continue as planned. As conditions improved during the day, so did the fireworks forecast. By late afternoon, Kayla Mamelak, a spokeswoman for Mr. Adams, said, “I don’t know of any discussion to cancel.”

Hundreds of miles to the west, a cloud of polluted air hung over the northwestern part of North Dakota on Friday. Ryan Mills, who manages the air monitoring program for the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality, said a low-pressure weather system was pulling wildfire smoke from Canada almost directly south, where it hovered low to the ground in high-elevation areas.

On Friday morning, Mr. Mills was in his office in Bismarck, the state’s capital, when he received a call from his in-laws in Garrison, 75 miles to the northwest. They had an urgent question: Were the skies ever going to clear up?

“It’s getting better as we speak,” he told them.

By Friday afternoon, there were more than 500 wildfires burning across Canada, with nearly half of them burning out of control, according to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre. Canada’s wildfire season started several weeks early this year, which means the fires could impact air quality across North America for weeks.



# Surviving Texas Heat in Prisons Without Air-Conditioning

By J. DAVID GOODMAN

HOUSTON — On the third day of 100-degree temperatures last week, locked without air-conditioning in a Texas prison north of Houston, Joseph Martire said he began to feel overwhelmed. His breathing grew heavy.

An inmate for nearly 16 years, Mr. Martire was expecting to be released in a few weeks. But it was so hot that day, he recalled, that he wondered if he would make it that long. He was covered in sweat and felt so lightheaded that he had to brace himself against a wall. At some point, he passed out.

“It’s kind of weird getting woken up with fingers in your eyes and not knowing how you got there,” Mr. Martire, 35, said of the efforts to revive him by pressing on pressure points around his eyes. He was eventually moved to an air-conditioned emergency medical area. “They kept me there for two hours, drinking ice water, salt water, taking my temperature, making sure I was still alive,” he said.

The weeklong June heat wave scorching Texas has been particularly brutal and dangerous inside the state’s sprawling prison system, where a majority of those incarcerated, and the guards who watch over them, have been struggling without air-conditioning.

In more than a dozen interviews this week, current and former inmates, as well as their relatives and friends, described an elemental effort at survival going on inside the prisons, with inmates relying on warm water, wet towels and fans that push hot air. Some flooded their cells with water from their combination sink-toilets, lying on the wet concrete for relief. Others, desperate for the guards’ attention, lit fires or took to screaming in unison for water or for help with an inmate who had passed out.

“If somebody goes down, we start beating on the lockers and doors yelling, ‘Man down!’” said Luke King, 41, an inmate who, along with Mr. Martire, is in a prison in Huntsville, Texas. With the heat, he said, that has been happening “at least daily.”

The superheated conditions inside many prisons — where temperatures can reach 110 degrees or above — have been a well-known problem for years, and not just in Texas. Across the South, prisons in habitually hot states like Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi also do not provide centralized air-conditioning in most cases, according to a 2019 report. And the heat dome that has settled in recent weeks over Texas has been increasingly shifting to the east, bringing extreme temperatures into those Southern states.

In Texas, the Republican-controlled House this year proposed spending \$545 million to install air-conditioning in the majority of state prisons that do not have it. The House also overwhelmingly approved a bill to require that the temperature in prisons be no higher than 85 degrees and no lower than 65. State law in Texas already requires county jails to keep the temperature within that range.

The bill to require cooling died in the State Senate. And despite a record surplus, the final state budget did not include money specifically for prison air-conditioning, though state prison officials have been slowly expanding cooling facilities within their existing budgets.

State Representative Terry Canales, a Democrat from South Texas, blamed the lack of action on Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, a conservative Republican who leads the Senate. Mr. Patrick’s office did not respond to a request for comment.

“The narrative comes from the 1980s that we need to be tough on crime, and installing A.C. in prisons seems soft on inmates,” said Mr. Canales, who sponsored the temperature legislation and has brought bills to address prison heat in each of the last two legislative sessions.

“The truth is the state is paying millions of dollars a year in heat-

## Inmates Face Indoor Temperatures of 110 Degrees or More



ROSE BACA/THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

An inmate worked outdoors outside a prison unit in Huntsville, where temperatures have topped 100 degrees. In some facilities, inmates are fainting from intense heat and getting little relief.



VERONICA G. CARDENAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

An inmate slept shirtless at the Reynaldo V. Lopez State Jail in Edinburg. “It’s like sitting inside of a convection oven,” said Joseph Martire, who is serving time in a prison near Houston.



VERONICA G. CARDENAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

‘I’d hate to lose my life behind this. I’d hate to die because I’m in a hot cell.’

LUKE KING, who is serving a sentence in a prison in Huntsville. He has seen many “go down” from the heat.

related lawsuits and we’re facing chronic corrections-officer shortages,” he added. “It’s not conservative. Being in prison in and of itself is a punishment. But nobody is signed up to be tortured.”

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice, which runs the prisons, has not attributed any of the 32 inmate deaths recorded this month to excessive heat, and has not reported a heat-related death since 2012. Inmate advocates have questioned those statistics. A 2022 study of Texas prisoner deaths found that on average, more than 10 a year could be attributed to the heat in prisons without air-conditioning.

“We take numerous precautions to lessen the effects of hot temperatures for those incarcerated within our facilities,” Amanda Hernandez, a department spokeswoman, said in a statement. “These efforts work.” So far in June, she said, there have been five inmates with heat-related injuries who required medical care “beyond first aid.” Last June, there were three such cases.

She added: “Much like those Texans who do not have access to air-conditioning in their homes,” inmates are able to keep themselves cool by other means: ice water, fans and “access to air-conditioned respite areas when

needed.” She said that the department had taken steps to identify inmates who were potentially more vulnerable to the heat and given them priority placement in areas with air-conditioning.

The department operates 98 facilities, of which 31 are fully air-conditioned and 14 have no cooling at all. The rest have air-conditioning only in certain areas. The department has been adding air-conditioning each year and now has more than 43,000 “cool beds” — about a third of those in the system — according to Ms. Hernandez. The department has discussed plans to eventually air-condition all prisons at a project-

ed cost of more than \$1 billion, but still needs the funding.

In the meantime, several current inmates and their families said prisoners were suffering through the heat and had often been unable to access the promised respite areas, either because of staffing shortages or because they were denied permission. Others said there were few fans available, or that the water in their prison showers — meant as a means of cooling — offered little relief.

“He says, ‘I feel terrible, I have to go take a shower,’” said Cynthia Anguiano, 41, describing a conversation with her fiancé, who has been serving a long sentence for a fatal shooting. “And then the water comes out like almost hot.”

She said two of her brothers, also in Texas prisons, had been sharing their struggles with her via text messages. “Hey sis, what’s up? It’s been hot as hell over here,” read one of their messages, shared with The New York Times. “I get shortness of breath because there’s no air circulation.”

Hope Thommen, 40, said her boyfriend was serving a sentence for armed robbery in a prison in Central Texas, which he described to her as feeling “like a chicken coop in the heat with no shade.” He told her that other inmates had set fire to sheets and mattresses, “trying to get the guards attention because they’re hot,” she said.

“From the minute he wakes up he says, ‘I feel like I’m dying,’” Ms. Thommen said.

One of the most vocal groups advocating for inmates in Texas grew out of concern over the heat in past years. “The way to solve this problem would be to simply put the air-conditioners in,” said Amite Dominick, one of the authors of the 2022 heat death study and the founder of the group, Texas Prisons Community Advocates. “People are desperate. They’re tired of it.”

Excessive temperatures inside prisons have also been a problem for employees and guards, said Jeff Ormsby, the executive director of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Texas Corrections, a union representing prison workers.

“It’s been really bad. We’ve had several people call and say they’re quitting because of the heat,” Mr. Ormsby said. “It’s a messed-up situation. The working conditions are horrific. The assaults go up in the summer because of the heat. It’s just a stress factor.”

An employee at one prison said the heat was so intense that his work clothes were often soaked through with sweat and that he occasionally felt overwhelmed enough to need to sit down. The employee, who requested anonymity because he feared reprisal for complaining about his work conditions, said he had seen a colleague taken away in an ambulance this month.

Inmates described similar experiences of watching those around them succumb to the extreme temperatures. “I’ve seen a lot of old people go down from this heat. There’s just no relief here, there ain’t none,” said Mr. King in Huntsville, who was imprisoned for crimes including theft and burglary. “I’d hate to lose my life behind this. I’d hate to die because I’m in a hot cell.”

He added: “I understand that we’re inmates and we make mistakes. Paying for your mistakes is one thing. But living like this is wrong.”

Mr. Martire, who has been serving a sentence for burglary, said that when he passed out from the heat this month there were two others in the emergency area, also recovering from being overheated.

“It’s like sitting inside of a convection oven,” he said in a telephone interview. “It heats up and it keeps on heating up when the sun goes down.” He has tried to stay focused on his impending release and said his plans for coping with the summer heat on the outside were relatively simple.

“Swimming as much as possible,” he said.

## Double Blow To New York: First Smoke, Then Swarms

By CHRISTINE HAUSER

It’s been described as a plague and a sign of the end times, turning New York City into the “Bug Apple.”

Insects may descend on populated places in unusual swarms for many reasons, such as mating season or in search of food. But New Yorkers pestered by clouds of small insects this week have wondered whether they were being dealt another consequence of the smothering smoke drifting in from Canadian wildfires.

As swarms of bugs were changing the city’s horizon, layering the muted skyline of skyscrapers with a swirling, street-level cloud of insects, some New Yorkers complained they could not open their mouths to breathe as they walked down the street, for fear of inhaling a big gulp of them.

Pedestrians swatted as they walked. Diners at outdoor patios in Brooklyn fanned the air.

Gothamist reported that “residents of the Bug Apple want these unwelcome tourists to skip town.”

WABC amplified the city’s pain: “No, you are not ‘bugging-out.’ A swarm of insects has seemingly taken over the city.”

But for every offhand, on-the-street reference to a Biblical-style plague, be it a swarm of locusts or

## Insects have a city swatting the air, but are actually harmless.

gnats or hail and thunder, there is a scientist.

Dr. Corrie Moreau, a Cornell University professor in entomology, who looked at images of the insects, which can be green or white, said she believed they were aphids looking to mate.

Insect swarms often emerge to coordinate reproduction, which she believed could be attributed to the current appearance in New York City.

“It is unusual that there are so many of these aphids swarming this year,” she said. “It is because of the mild winter.”

Aphids are nonstinging insects that normally suck juice from plants. They are generally wingless, but will appear in winged form in the spring and the fall.

The mild winter and rainy spring have made aphids optimistic about procreating. Moisture means flowers and plants, a sign for them to go into reproductive mode in swarms, increasing the potential gene pool.

“It increases the probability that they are going to be highly successful,” Dr. Moreau said.

Doug Currie, the senior curator of entomology at the Royal Ontario Museum, said he had not heard of any similar swarms in Canada.

“Trust me, the Canadian media would be contacting me,” he said.

His most memorable aphid swarm in Canada was in 2001, when soybean aphids clustered so heavily around the lights of a stadium, then known as SkyDome, that the Toronto Blue Jays game against the Baltimore Orioles was paused in the third inning.

“It caused them to close the roof to get the game going again,” he said.

But in New York, there might be some slim connection between the aphids and the overhanging smoke.

“I think that the smoke is amplifying our ability to see them well,” Dr. Moreau said. “Because I can’t see that far, I tend to focus on things that are closer.”

Aphids are probably not harmful if accidentally ingested, which some city types have been expressing is a concern if they walk down the street with jaws agape. So forget the “bug” pollution. It’s the smoke to be concerned about.

“There have been enough Manhattanites who have been biking. These are not toxic in any way,” Dr. Moreau said. “They should have masks on anyway, from the air quality.”



NECHAEV/KON. SHUTTERSTOCK

A scientist says aphids are probably invading because conditions are right for mating.

## Accurate Heat-Related Death Toll Could Remain Unclear for Weeks

By ANUSHKA PATIL

The weekend is expected to bring some relief to parts of the South that have been smothered by a broiling heat wave. But the death toll will probably remain unclear for weeks, if not months: Even though heat-related illness is known to be a leading cause of death from weather or environmental events in the United States, getting an accurate count is difficult.

This is in part because the symptoms of heat-related illness can vary and worsen a patient’s underlying medical conditions,

meaning heat-related deaths are often misclassified and thus undercounted, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

To find the number of heat-related deaths in Travis County, Texas, for example, one would first have to wait a minimum of 30 days for medical examiner reports to be completed. The next step would be to find the number of cases in which the official cause of death was listed as hyperthermia, or abnormally high body temperature, said Hector Nieto, a county spokesman. But extreme

## Fatal conditions like heart failure could be missed in the count.

heat can also contribute to a rise in other potentially fatal conditions, like heart failure, and those deaths may be missed.

The county medical examiner’s office categorizes deaths only by cause and manner, not by a potentially precipitating event, Mr. Ni-

eto said. During the state’s brutal winter storm in 2021, it was “impossible for us” to give a winter storm death toll, he recalled. The medical examiner’s office could report only the total number of deaths around the time period, and “from there it was up to somebody else to interpret if that was a winter storm death,” he said.

Determining an accurate death toll can also be complicated in Texas because the vast majority of the state’s counties do not have their own medical examiners’ offices and rely on those in larger counties to determine cause of

death.

There is also the more fundamental matter of a state’s willingness to report heat-related deaths, which the C.D.C. says are largely preventable. Texas has not reported a single heat-related death in its prisons since 2012, even though a dangerous lack of air-conditioning in many facilities has been a known problem for years. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice has recorded 32 inmate deaths in what has been a sweltering month. None so far have been attributed to excessive heat.



The Supreme Court

# In 6-3 Vote, Justices Say No to Biden’s Student Loan Relief Plan

From Page A1

Jr., writing for the majority, said a 2003 law, which allows the secretary of education to “waive or modify” relevant statutes and regulations in emergencies, had not authorized the administration to cancel the debt.

“The secretary’s plan has ‘modified’ the cited provisions,” the chief justice wrote, quoting an earlier opinion, “only in the same sense that ‘the French Revolution “modified” the status of the French nobility’ — it has abolished them and supplanted them with a new regime entirely.”

Justice Elena Kagan summarized her dissent from the bench, a rare move and a sign of deep disagreement. In siding with six Republican-led states that sued to block the program, she said, the majority opinion was opportunistic, unprincipled and infected by politics.

“From the first page to the last,” she added in her written dissent, “today’s opinion departs from the demands of judicial restraint. At the behest of a party that has suffered no injury, the majority decides a contested public policy issue properly belonging to the politically accountable branches and the people they represent.”

Borrowers and advocates expressed dismay at the decision and pressed Mr. Biden to find another way.

Claude Reed, 74, has spent decades trying to pay off student loans, and half a century after finishing college, still owes \$4,600, more than he borrowed to start. Mr. Biden’s plan would have freed him from debt, but the ruling on Friday means he again faces the prospect of having money deducted from his only source of income, Social Security.

“This is like football,” said Mr. Reed, who lives in Idaho Falls, Idaho. “Instead of me starting at the 20-yard line, I’m behind in the other end zone, you know?”

Republicans, for their part, cast the decision as a victory for taxpayers and reiterated that the plan was unfair.

“The 87% of Americans without student loans are no longer forced to pay for the 13% who do,” Speaker Kevin McCarthy, Republican of California, said on Twitter as he praised the dismissal of what he called “President Biden’s student loan giveaway.”

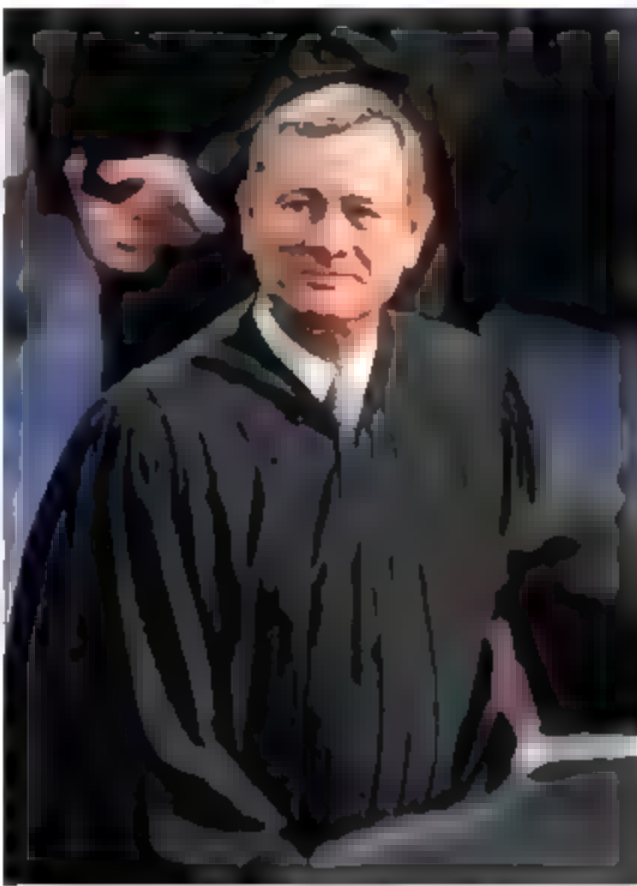
The Biden administration said its plan was meant to address the coronavirus pandemic and its lingering effects and was authorized by the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003, usually called the HEROES Act. That law, initially enacted after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, gives the secretary of education the power to “waive or

Stacy Cowley contributed reporting.



MENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Biden administration said its plan was meant to address the pandemic and its effects. But Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. said a 2003 law had not authorized the administration to erase the debt.



POOL PHOTO BY JI LIA NIKHINSON

modify any statutory or regulatory provision” to protect borrowers affected by “a war or other military operation or national emergency.”

In March 2020, President Donald J. Trump declared that the coronavirus pandemic was a national emergency, and his administration invoked the HEROES Act to pause student loan repayment requirements and to suspend the accrual of interest.

The Biden administration followed suit. The payment pause has cost the government more than \$100 billion, according to the Government Accountability Office.

In August, the administration said it planned to switch gears, ending the repayment pause but forgiving \$10,000 in debt for individuals earning less than \$125,000 per year, or \$250,000 per house-

hold, and \$20,000 for those who received Pell grants for low-income families.

Nearly 26 million borrowers have applied to have some of their student loan debt erased. While the government has approved 16 million applications, no debt has been canceled yet. The Education Department, which owns and manages the government’s \$1.5 trillion student debt portfolio, stopped accepting applications in light of the legal challenges

In separate cases, the six Republican-led states — Nebraska, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas and South Carolina — and two individuals sued to stop the new plan. They relied on recent decisions employing the so-called major questions doctrine, which says that Congress must speak particularly clearly when authorizing the executive branch to act on important political and economic questions.

Chief Justice Roberts said the doctrine doomed the loan forgiveness program.

Last June, the Supreme Court invoked the doctrine in a decision that curtailed the Environmental Protection Agency’s power to address climate change. Without “clear congressional authorization,” the court said, the agency could not act.

The court also ruled, on similar grounds, that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was not authorized to impose a moratorium on evictions and that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration was not authorized to tell large employers to have their workers vaccinated against Covid-19 or undergo frequent testing.

The student loan program, Chief Justice Roberts wrote, also had vast economic and political significance. “The secretary’s action is staggering by any measure,” he wrote.

A budget model prepared by the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, the chief justice wrote, estimated that the program could cost taxpayers as much as \$519 billion.

“That is 10 times the ‘economic impact’ that we found significant in concluding that an eviction moratorium implemented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention triggered analysis under the major questions doctrine,” Chief Justice Roberts wrote. “It amounts to nearly one-third of the government’s \$1.7 trillion in annu-

al discretionary spending. There is no serious dispute that the secretary claims the authority to exercise control over a significant portion of the American economy.”

Justice Kagan argued the 2003 law squarely and plainly authorized the program.

“The statute provides the secretary with broad authority to give emergency relief to student-loan borrowers, including by altering usual discharge rules,” she wrote. “What the secretary did fits comfortably within that delegation. But the court forbids him to proceed. As in other recent cases, the rules of the game change when Congress enacts broad delegations allowing agencies to take substantial regulatory measures.”

Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel A. Alito Jr., Neil M. Gorsuch, Brett M. Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett joined the majority opinion.

Justice Barrett issued an extended concurring opinion exploring the limits of the major questions doctrine. She concluded that “the doctrine should not be taken for more than it is — the familiar principle that we do not interpret a statute for all it is worth when a reasonable person would not read it that way.”

In dissent, Justice Kagan, joined by Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Ketanji Brown Jackson, issued a harsh critique of the doctrine, calling it a way to ampli-

**An executive action that would have canceled \$400 billion in debt is dismissed.**

## Court’s Decision Unravels A Signature Plan of Biden’s

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR

WASHINGTON — President Biden accused Supreme Court justices of having “misinterpreted the Constitution” and vowed on Friday to seek new ways to relieve the crushing weight of student debt after the court’s conservative majority rejected his \$400 billion plan to forgive federal loans.

Speaking from the White House after the court issued its 6-to-3 decision, Mr. Biden lashed out at Republicans who challenged his plan, saying they were willing to forgive loans for business owners during the pandemic, but not for Americans struggling with college debt.

“The hypocrisy is stunning,” he said.

The president suggested that the court had been influenced by “Republican elected officials and special interests” who opposed his plan, which would have forgiven up to \$20,000 in debt for as many as 40 million people.

“They said no, no,” Mr. Biden said of the justices, “literally snatching from the hands of millions of Americans thousands of dollars in debt relief that was about to change their lives.”

The court’s finding that Mr. Biden’s loan plan exceeded his authority under the HEROES Act unraveled one of the president’s signature policy efforts and ratcheted up the pressure on him to find a new way to make good on a promise to a key constituency as the 2024 presidential campaign gets underway.

Mr. Biden said he had directed his secretary of education to use a different law, the Higher Education Act of 1965, to provide some debt relief. But it was unclear whether that law could be used to provide widespread debt relief. And education officials said it would take months, at least, before regulations could be put in

place to begin providing debt relief.

Officials expressed confidence that the Higher Education Act provides authority for the secretary to broadly “settle and compromise” student loan debts.

Chief Justice John Roberts, the author of Friday’s ruling, appeared to undercut that argument in his opinion, suggesting that the ability to relieve debt under the Higher Education Act was limited to the disabled, people who are bankrupt or who have been defrauded.

But Mr. Biden said his administration will try anyway.

“In my view, it’s the best path that remains,” Mr. Biden insisted.

Mr. Biden said he had directed the Education Department not to report borrowers who miss student loan payments to credit rating agencies for 12 months. Payments are set to begin in the fall after being paused since the beginning of the pandemic.

The department also has proposed changes to benefit borrowers on an income-based repayment plan. A draft of the changes released in January said they could reduce payments on undergraduate loans to 5 percent of discretionary income, limit the accumulation of unpaid interest and allow more low-income workers to qualify for zero-dollar payments.

The ruling in the student loan lawsuit was the culmination of Republican efforts assailing a centerpiece of Mr. Biden’s broader agenda, as the president and his allies try to make the case to Americans for a second term in the White House.

In nearly two and a half years, the president has faced significant opposition in Congress and the courts to promises he made as a candidate. He dropped efforts for free community college and pre-school. He abandoned taxpayer



MICHAEL A. MCCOY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

funding for child care. The courts have blocked some of his most ambitious climate policies and delayed his efforts to control the border.

Student debt relief was among the most costly relief programs Mr. Biden proposed in the wake of the pandemic. But unlike his successes in seeking congressional approval for infrastructure spending and chip manufacturing subsidies, the president used his own authority to forgive \$400 billion in student loan debt. On Friday, the court said he went too far.

More broadly, the court’s decision was the latest blow to presidential power, with the justices putting new limits on how much leeway the executive branch has when interpreting congressional statutes.

That could have far-reaching implications. With Congress in political paralysis, recent presidents — including Barack Obama and Donald J. Trump — have increasingly turned to executive actions and orders to advance their policy goals.

Courts have responded by de-

laying or overturning some of those actions. Mr. Obama’s efforts to provide protection from deportation for the parents of some immigrants never went into effect. Many of Mr. Trump’s executive actions were deemed excessive by judges.

**A Democratic push to find an alternate path to debt forgiveness.**

In the student loan case, the court said that Mr. Biden had stretched the law beyond reason.

When Mr. Biden announced last summer that his government would forgive up to \$20,000 in federal student loan debt, student advocacy groups and many progressives cheered the move.

His plan, which came after months of agonizing about whom it would benefit and whether it was too costly, would have been a

centerpiece of his argument to voters that his economic agenda is designed to help low- and middle-income Americans blaze a path to greater prosperity.

Instead, a majority of the justices agreed with critics who said the president’s debt relief plan went beyond the president’s authority under congressional legislation that allows changes to student loans during a public emergency.

Within moments of the court ruling on Friday, it was clear that Mr. Biden would be under immense pressure from the left wing of the Democratic Party to respond swiftly and aggressively.

Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic Senate leader who had pushed hard for student debt relief, demanded that Mr. Biden not give up.

“I call upon the administration to do everything in its power to deliver for millions of working- and middle-class Americans struggling with student loan debt,” Mr. Schumer said.

Senator Bernie Sanders, the

fy the court’s power.

“The question, the majority helpfully tells us, is ‘who has the authority’ to make such significant calls,” she wrote. “The answer, as is now becoming commonplace, is this court.”

A key threshold question in the case, Biden v. Nebraska, No. 22-506, was whether the plaintiffs have suffered the sort of direct and concrete injury that gives them standing to sue.

When the case was argued in February, the justices focused on a nonprofit entity that services federal loans, the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority, also known as MOHELA. The states argued that the entity’s potential losses from the loan forgiveness program were enough to confer standing because it is effectively an arm of the State of Missouri. They also said that the authority might fail to make payments to Missouri if the program were allowed to proceed.

On Friday, Chief Justice Roberts adopted that argument.

“By law and function, MOHELA is an instrumentality of Missouri: It was created by the state to further a public purpose, is governed by state officials and state appointees, reports to the state, and may be dissolved by the state,” the chief justice wrote. “The secretary’s plan will cut MOHELA’s revenues, impairing its efforts to aid Missouri college students.”

That was the only basis for standing in the case. “We need not consider the other theories of standing raised by the states,” he wrote.

In a separate decision, the court unanimously held that two individual borrowers challenging the program lacked standing.

Justice Kagan scoffed at the loan service entity’s connection to the case brought by the states, noting that it had not sued on its own behalf or cooperated in the suit.

“Is there a person in America who thinks Missouri is here because it is worried about MOHELA’s loss of loan-servicing fees?” she asked. “I would like to meet him.”

Chief Justice Roberts concluded his opinion with a lament.

“It has become a disturbing feature of some recent opinions to criticize the decisions with which they disagree as going beyond the proper role of the judiciary,” he wrote.

Justice Kagan wrote that “there is surely nothing personal in the dispute here.”

“But justices throughout history have raised the alarm when the court has overreached,” she wrote, adding that alarm was warranted now.

“In a case not a case,” she wrote, “the majority overrides the combined judgment of the legislative and executive branches, with the consequence of eliminating loan forgiveness for 43 million Americans.”

President Biden on Friday lashed out at Republicans who challenged his plan after the Supreme Court’s ruling.

Vermont independent, went even further.

“The president has the clear authority under the Higher Education Act of 1965 to cancel student debt,” Mr. Sanders wrote in a statement. “He must use this authority immediately.”

For much of the last year, administration officials had refused to say whether they were working on a “Plan B” in the event the Supreme Court rejected the president’s plan.

Even after several justices expressed deep skepticism during oral arguments earlier this year, Mr. Biden and his aides continued to insist that they had confidence in the legality of the debt relief plan and would not say whether they were working on an alternative.

Millions of people with federal student loans are about to get another financial shock this fall, when the yearslong pause on repayment of existing loans ends.

The federal government, under Mr. Trump, imposed the pause on repayments at the beginning of the pandemic, as businesses closed and millions of people lost their jobs. Mr. Biden renewed the pause several times since taking office, but has said it will not be renewed again now that the pandemic has largely ended.

Payments are set to resume in October.

Mary-Pat Hector, the chief executive of Rise, a student advocacy organization that has pushed for student debt relief and college affordability, said many young Americans will blame Mr. Biden if he cannot deliver significant debt relief.

“Many young people, particularly Gen Z, don’t like things that seem performative, and they believe in holding people accountable,” she said. “I think that we are going to see that reaction from a lot of people.”



The Supreme Court



Lorie Smith in Littleton, Colo., in November. She has not yet opened her web design wedding business while challenging a state law.

Web Designer Allowed to Turn Away Gay People

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“The L.G.B.T. rights movement has made historic strides, and I am proud of the role this court recently played in that history. Today, however, we are taking steps backward.”

President Biden called the court’s decision “disappointing.”

“I’m deeply concerned that the decision could invite more discrimination against L.G.B.T.Q.I.+ Americans,” Mr. Biden said in a statement. “More broadly, today’s decision weakens longstanding laws that protect all Americans against discrimination in public accommodations—including people of color, people with disabilities, people of faith, and women.”

A Colorado law forbids discrimination against gay people by businesses open to the public as well as statements announcing such discrimination. Ms. Smith, who has said that her Christian faith requires her to turn away same-sex couples seeking website design services, has not yet begun her wedding business. Nor has she posted a proposed statement on her current website about her policy and beliefs for fear, she has said, of running afoul of the law.

So she sued to challenge it, saying it violated her rights to free speech and the free exercise of religion.

Colorado’s attorney general, Phil Weiser, warned of the ruling’s implications, saying that it would pave the way for all sorts of businesses to turn away L.G.B.T.Q. customers.

“This deeply concerning opinion is far out of step with the will of the American people and American values,” Mr. Weiser said in a statement.

During a news conference after the ruling, Ms. Smith, her voice cracking with emotion, described the outcome as a “victory not just for me but for all of us.”

The court “affirmed today that Colorado can’t force me or anyone to say something we don’t believe,” she said.

In the majority opinion, Justice Gorsuch wrote that the government could not force people who speak for pay on a given topic to accept commissions in cases where they disagree with the underlying message.

Such an approach, he said, could lead to bizarre results. He offered the possibility of a Muslim movie director being forced to “make a film with a Zionist message,” or an atheist being forced to accept a commission to create a mural “celebrating evangelical zeal.”

“Taken seriously, that principle would allow the government to force all manner of artists, speech-



Ms. Smith in December. On Friday, she said that the government “can’t force me or anyone to say something we don’t believe.”

writers and others whose services involve speech to speak what they do not believe on pain of penalty,” Justice Gorsuch wrote. “Countless other creative professionals, too, could be forced to choose between remaining silent, producing speech that violates their beliefs, or speaking their minds and incurring sanctions for doing so.”

He added that states could not use public accommodation laws to deny speakers the right to choose the content of their messages. Otherwise, he wrote, “the better the artist, the finer the writer, the more unique his talent, the more easily his voice could be conscripted to disseminate the government’s preferred messages. That would not respect the First Amendment; more nearly, it would spell its demise.”

In her dissent, Justice Sotomayor described public accommodation laws as designed to ensure “equal dignity in the common market.” She cited a landmark 1964 Supreme Court case, *Heart of Atlanta Motel Inc. v. United States*, where the court found that hotels did not have the right to discriminate against Black guests.

“If you have ever taken advantage of a public business without being denied service because of who you are, then you have come to enjoy the dignity and freedom that this principle protects,” she wrote. “Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (L.G.B.T.) people, no less than anyone else, deserve that dignity and freedom.”

Justice Gorsuch responded directly to the dissent in the majority opinion, writing that the two sides looked at the same case and saw totally different issues.

“It is difficult to read the dissent and conclude we are looking at the same case,” he wrote. The dissenting justices, he wrote, focused on “the strides gay Americans have made towards securing equal justice under law.”

But the conservative justices did not see the case through that lens, he said, writing that “none of

this answers the question we face today: Can a state force someone who provides her own expressive services to abandon her conscience and speak its preferred message instead?”

When the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case, 303 Creative L.L.C. v. Elenis, No. 21-476, it agreed to decide only one question: “whether applying a public-accommodation law to compel an artist to speak or stay silent violates the free speech clause of the First Amendment.”

A divided three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the

**Biden says that ‘the decision could invite more discrimination.’**

10th Circuit, in Denver, had applied the most demanding form of judicial scrutiny to the Colorado law but upheld it.

“Colorado has a compelling interest in protecting both the dignity interests of members of marginalized groups and their material interests in accessing the commercial marketplace,” Judge Mary Beck Briscoe wrote for the majority, adding that the law is narrowly tailored to address that interest.

“To be sure,” Judge Briscoe wrote, “L.G.B.T. consumers may be able to obtain wedding-website design services from other businesses; yet, L.G.B.T. consumers will never be able to obtain wedding-related services of the same quality and nature as those that appellants offer.”

Judge Briscoe added that “Colorado may prohibit speech that promotes unlawful activity, including unlawful discrimination.”

In dissent, Chief Judge Timothy M. Tymkovich, citing George Orwell, said “the majority takes the

remarkable — and novel — stance that the government may force Ms. Smith to produce messages that violate her conscience.”

This theme appeared to resonate with Justice Gorsuch, who adopted the language of Orwell in his opinion.

He wrote that the court’s liberal justices had abandoned “what this court’s cases have recognized time and time again: A commitment to speech for only some messages and some persons is no commitment at all.”

He added, citing Orwell from “The Freedom of the Press,” an essay he wrote in 1945 as the intended preface for “Animal Farm” but was not published until 1972 by The Times Literary Supplement: “If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.”

Justice Sotomayor said in her dissent that the conservative justices had misread the issue: “The majority’s repeated invocation of this Orwellian thought policing is revealing of just how much it misunderstands this case.”

The Supreme Court considered a similar dispute in 2018 after a Colorado baker refused to create a custom wedding cake for a same-sex marriage. But that case, *Mascherpie Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, failed to to yield a definitive ruling.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, who wrote the majority opinion in the 7-to-2 decision, seemed unable to choose between two of his core commitments. He was the author of every major Supreme Court decision protecting gay rights under the Constitution. But he was also the court’s most ardent defender of free speech.

Instead of choosing between those values, Justice Kennedy chose an off ramp that not everyone found convincing. He wrote that the baker, Jack Phillips, should win because he had been treated unfairly by members of a civil rights commission who had made comments hostile to religion.

The court’s membership has changed since then with the additions of Justices Brett M. Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett shifting the court to the right.

Lower courts have generally sided with gay and lesbian couples who were refused service, ruling that potential customers are entitled to equal treatment, at least in parts of the country with laws forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The owners of businesses challenging those laws have argued that the government should not force them to choose between the requirements of their faiths and their livelihoods. Their opponents say that businesses open to the public must provide equal treatment to potential customers.

Court Will Consider Domestic Violence In Major Guns Case

By ADAM LIPTAK and GLENN THRUSH

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court agreed on Friday to consider whether the government may forbid people subject to domestic violence orders from having guns, setting up a major test of its ruling last year vastly expanding people’s right to arm themselves in public.

The case will turn on the scope of a new legal standard established in that decision, one whose reliance on historical practices has sown confusion as courts have struggled to apply it, with some judges sweeping aside gun controls that have been on the books for decades.

It comes as the nation struggles to address a seemingly unending series of mass shootings and other gun violence, and about a year after Congress briefly broke its partisan deadlock to pass a modest bipartisan gun control law.

Last year, in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*, the court, by a 6-to-3 vote, struck down a New York law that placed strict limits on carrying guns outside the home.

The court’s decision to hear a Second Amendment case in its next term was seen by lawyers on both sides of the issue as an attempt to define the parameters of the *Bruen* ruling, and to perhaps provide a clearer set of standards.

Noah Lumbantobing, a spokesman for March for Our Lives, which was founded by students following the mass shooting in Parkland, Fla. in 2018, said that in taking up the case, the court would have “an opportunity to clean up some of the legal mess” from last year.

Some conservative legal experts have expressed concern that the court will end up curbing last year’s decision. Stephen Halbrook, a lawyer who has argued gun cases before the court, recently described the case as a “bad vehicle” to do so because the defendant, Zackey Rahimi, appeared unsuited to owning a firearm under any circumstances.

The Supreme Court has issued only two significant Second Amendment decisions since 2008, when it established an individual right to keep guns in the home for self-defense in *District of Columbia v. Heller*. Two years later, in *McDonald v. Chicago*, the court extended the *Heller* decision, which concerned federal gun laws, to state and local ones.

More than a decade of silence followed, with the court turning down countless appeals of decisions upholding gun control laws, to the frustration of some of its conservative members. The arrival of three justices appointed by President Donald J. Trump, which established a conservative supermajority, changed the calculus.

The court’s rationale in the *Bruen* ruling was as important as its outcome.

The majority opinion, written by Justice Clarence Thomas, announced a new standard by which courts must now judge restrictions on gun rights, turning to early American history as a guide: “The government must demonstrate that the regulation is consistent with this nation’s historical tradition of firearm regulation.”

The constitutionality of modern gun control measures, he wrote, depends on whether there were analogous laws during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Justice Thomas acknowledged that the new standard was inexact.

“Analogical reasoning requires only that the government identify a well-established and representative historical *analogue*, not a historical *twin*,” Justice Thomas wrote. “So even if a modern-day regulation is not a dead ringer for historical precursors, it still may be analogous enough to pass constitutional muster.”

In March, a unanimous three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, in New Orleans, said that new standard required it to strike down a federal law prohibiting people subject to domestic violence orders from possessing firearms because there was no historical support for it.

The case, *United States v. Rahimi*, No. 22-915, concerns Mr. Rahimi, a drug dealer in Texas with a history of armed violence, according to court records. In 2019, Mr. Rahimi assaulted his girlfriend and threatened to shoot her if she told anyone, leading her to obtain a restraining or-

**Can people under a restraining order be denied firearms?**

der. The order suspended Mr. Rahimi’s handgun license and prohibited him from possessing firearms.

He threatened a different woman with a gun, leading to charges of assault with a deadly weapon. Then, in the space of two months, he opened fire in public five times.

Upset about a social media post from someone to whom he had sold drugs, for instance, he shot an AR-15 rifle into his former client’s home. When a fast-food restaurant declined a friend’s credit card, he fired several bullets into the air.

The shootings led to a search warrant of Mr. Rahimi’s home, which uncovered weapons, and he was charged with violating the federal law.

After a judge rejected his Second Amendment challenge to the law, he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to more than six years in prison. The Fifth Circuit initially affirmed his conviction in a short decision, rebuffing the argument that the law violated the Second Amendment in a footnote.

But the appeals court reversed course after the *Bruen* decision last June.

The Fifth Circuit rejected a variety of old laws identified by the government as possible historical analogues, saying they did not sufficiently resemble the one con-



Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas cites history as a guiding factor in decisions.

cerning domestic violence orders. Many of them, Judge Cory T. Wilson wrote for the panel, “disarmed classes of people considered to be dangerous, specifically including those unwilling to take an oath of allegiance, slaves and Native Americans.” That was different, he wrote, from domestic violence orders, which make case-by-case judgments about a particular individual’s dangerousness.

Judge Wilson, who was appointed by Mr. Trump, wrote that the government’s insistence that it could disarm people who were not law-abiding “admits to no true limiting principle.”

“Could speeders be stripped of their right to keep and bear arms?” he asked. “Political non-conformists? People who do not recycle or drive an electric vehicle?”

Judge Wilson acknowledged that the federal law at issue in the case “embodies salutary policy goals meant to protect vulnerable people in our society.” But he said the approach required by the *Bruen* decision did not allow courts to weigh the benefits of the law against its burdens. What was significant, he wrote, quoting that decision, was that “our ancestors would never have accepted” the law on domestic violence orders.

Judge James C. Ho, who was also appointed by Mr. Trump, issued a concurring opinion saying there were other ways to protect victims of domestic abuse.

“Those who commit violence, including domestic violence,” he wrote, “shouldn’t just be disarmed—they should be detained, prosecuted, convicted and incarcerated. And that’s exactly why we have a criminal justice system—to punish criminals and disable them from engaging in further crimes.”

But Judge Ho said domestic violence orders were products of the civil justice system and were subject to abuse.

“That makes it difficult to justify” the law Mr. Rahimi challenged, he wrote, “as a measure to disarm dangerous individuals.”

Dissenting in the *Bruen* case last year, Justice Stephen G. Breyer wrote that the new test asked judges to perform unfamiliar tasks.

Judges are not historians, wrote Justice Breyer, who retired a few days later. “Legal experts typically have little experience answering or contesting historical questions or applying those answers to resolve contemporary problems,” he wrote.



In a 2018 case, the Supreme Court failed to issue a definitive ruling when a Colorado baker, Jack Phillips, center at left, refused to make a wedding cake for Charlie Craig, second from right, and Dave Mullins, far right. But the court has since shifted to the right.



ZACH GIBSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



The Supreme Court

Education  
Will Change  
After Court  
Ends Policy

By STEPHANIE SAUL

The Supreme Court’s decision to end race-conscious admissions will very likely change higher education in complicated ways. Some of them will be obvious, including immediate changes in the demographics of campus. Others, though, could also change society, affecting the doctors who treat you, the judges who hear your cases, and the college choices of Black students. Here are a few things that could happen, now and in the future.

The campus will look different.

What will happen to the student body at the 100 or so selective colleges and universities that practice race-conscious admissions? Nine states already ban this form of affirmative action at their public universities, providing a guide to what could happen. When Michigan banned race-conscious admissions in 2006, Black undergraduate enrollment at the state’s flagship campus in Ann Arbor declined to 4 percent in 2021, from 7 percent in 2006. A similar drop took place at the University of California’s most selective schools after Proposition 209 in 1996 banned race-conscious admissions. That year, Black students at the University of California, Los Angeles, made up 7 percent of the student body. By 1998, the percentage of Black students had fallen to 3.43 percent.

It’s not just undergraduates.

At least in the immediate future, the Supreme Court’s ruling is expected to lower the number of Black and Latino students at medical schools, law schools and other professional degree programs. In an amicus brief, groups including the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Medical Association said that “states that have banned race-conscious admissions have seen the number of minority medical-school students drop by roughly 37 percent,” reducing the pipeline of doctors from those groups. Nationally, about 5.7 percent of doctors are Black, and 6.8 percent identify as Hispanic. Applicants who are admitted to medical schools are mostly from the upper socioeconomic echelons. The American Bar Association also has expressed concern, saying that affirmative action ensures a more racially diverse profession and judiciary, which the organization said was essential to the legitimacy of the legal system.

**Black colleges could see a surge in applications.** After George Floyd’s murder by Minneapolis police in 2020, Black students seeking a nurturing environment and a sense of belonging flocked to historically Black colleges and universities. The effect of the Supreme Court ruling could be similar, said David A. Thomas, the president of Morehouse College, a selective H.B.C.U. in Atlanta. “College-ready Black students and their families will say, ‘We don’t want to go to places where we’re not wanted,’” he said in an interview. “And they will look for alternatives.”

**Colleges have a big new fear: lawsuits.** With the fall admissions season just weeks away, university officials are scrambling to revise their plans, but they are also aware that they could be sued. Conservative legal activists have promised to challenge admissions practices that are simply proxies for race-based admissions. In fact, that effort has already started. Pacific Legal Foundation, a libertarian legal activist group that is taking on public high school admissions, helped parents file a lawsuit against Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, a magnet school in Alexandria, Va. They claimed that the school used proxies for race, including ZIP codes, to boost the admissions of Black and Latino students at the expense of Asian American students. “That’s going to be the next frontier,” said Joshua P. Thompson, a lawyer at Pacific Legal Foundation.

Decision Could Have Chilling Effect on Workplace Diversity

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it dealt with a special carve-out for education,” said Scott Shepard, a fellow at the center. Mr. Shepard claimed victory nonetheless, arguing that the ruling would help deter employers who might be tempted overstep the law. “It couldn’t be clearer after the decision that fudging it at the edges” is not allowed, he said. (American Airlines and McDonald’s did not respond to requests for comment about their hiring and promotion policies.) Charlotte A. Burrows, who was designated chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission by President Biden, was also quick to declare that nothing had changed. She said the decision “does not address employer efforts to foster diverse and inclusive work forces or to engage the talents of all qualified workers, regardless of their background.” Some companies in the cross hairs of conservative groups underscored the point. “Novartis’s D.E.I. programs are narrowly tailored, fair, equitable and comply with existing law,” the drugmaker said in a statement, referring to diversity, equity and inclusion. Novartis, too, has received a letter from a lawyer representing Mr. Shepard’s group, demanding that it change its policy on hiring law firms. Beyond government contractors, affirmative action policies in the private sector are largely voluntary and governed by state and federal civil rights law. These laws prohibit employers from basing hiring or promotion decisions on a characteristic like race or gender, whether in favor of a candidate or against. The exception, said Jason Schwartz, a partner at the law firm Gibson Dunn, is that companies can take race into account if members of a racial minority were previously excluded from a job category — say, an investment bank recruiting Black bankers after it excluded Black people from such jobs for decades. In some cases, employers can also take into account the historical exclusion of a minority group from an industry — like Black and Latino people in the software industry. In principle, the logic of the Supreme Court’s ruling on college admissions could threaten some of these programs, like those intended to address industrywide discrimination. But even here, the legal case may be a stretch because the way employers typically make decisions about hiring and promotion differs from the way colleges make admissions decisions. “What seems to bother the court is that the admissions programs at issue treated race as a plus without regard to the individual student,” Pauline Kim, a professor at Washington University in St. Louis who specializes in employment law, said in an email. But “employment decisions are more often individualized decisions,” focusing on the fit between a candidate and a job, she said. The more meaningful effect of the court’s decision is likely to be greater pressure on policies that were already on questionable legal ground. Those could include leadership acceleration programs or internship programs that are open only to members of underrepresented minority groups. Many companies may also find themselves vulnerable over policies that comply with civil rights law on paper but violate it in practice, said Mike Delikat, a partner at Orrick who specializes in employment law. For example, a company’s policy may encourage recruiters to seek a more diverse pool of candidates, from which hiring decisions are made without regard to race. But if recruiters carry out the policy in a way that effectively creates a racial quota, he said, that is illegal. “The devil is in the details,” Mr. Delikat said. “Were they interpreting that to mean, ‘Come back with 25 percent of the internship class that has to be from an underrepresented group, and if not you get dinged as a bad recruiter?’” The college admissions cases before the Supreme Court were largely silent on these employment-related questions. Nonetheless, Mr. Delikat said, his firm has been counseling clients ever since the court agreed to hear the cases that they should ensure that their policies are airtight because an increase in litigation is likely. That is partly because of the growing attack from the political right on corporate policies aimed at diversity in hiring and other social and environmental goals. Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, who is seeking the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, has deplored “the woke mind virus” and proclaimed Florida “the state where woke goes to die.” The state has enacted legislation to limit di-



TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE; GETTY IMAGES



KIANA BRISTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Companies appear to face a greater threat of litigation over discrimination against minority group members than against white people under the ruling, which led to protests on Thursday.

iversity training in the workplace and has restricted state pension funds from basing investments on “woke environmental, social and corporate governance” considerations. Conservative legal groups have also mobilized on this front. A group run by Stephen Miller, a White House adviser in the Trump administration, contended in letters to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that the diversity and inclusion policies of several large companies were illegal and asked the commission to

Internship programs  
open only to members  
of minority groups  
could be problematic.

investigate. (Mr. Miller’s group did not respond to a request for comment about those cases.) The National Center for Public Policy Research, which is challenging corporate diversity policies, sued Starbucks directors and officers after they refused to undo the company’s diversity and inclusion policies in response to a letter demanding that they do so. A Starbucks spokeswoman said in an email on Friday, “Through our commitments to inclusion and diversity, we continue to strive to make Starbucks a welcoming place for our partners (employees).” Mr. Shepard, the fellow at the center, said more lawsuits were “reasonably likely” if other companies did not accede to demands to rein in their diversity and inclusion policies. One modest way to do so, said David Lopez, a former general counsel for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, is

to design policies that are race neutral but nonetheless likely to promote diversity — such as giving weight to whether a candidate has overcome significant obstacles. Mr. Lopez noted that, in the Supreme Court’s majority opinion, Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. argued that a university could take into account the effect on a candidate of having overcome racial discrimination, as long as the school didn’t consider the candidate’s race per se. But Dr. Tillery of Northwestern said making such changes to business diversity programs could be an overreaction to the ruling. While the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 generally precludes basing individual hiring and promotion decisions explicitly on race, it allows employers to remove obstacles that prevent companies from having a more diverse work force. Examples include training managers and recruiters to ensure that they aren’t unconsciously discriminating against racial minorities, or advertising jobs on certain campuses to expand the universe of potential applicants. In the end, companies appear to face a greater threat of litigation over discrimination against members of minority groups than from litigation over discrimination against white people. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, there were about 2,350 charges of that latter form of discrimination in employment in 2021, among about 21,000 race-based charges overall. “There’s an inherent interest in picking your poison,” Dr. Tillery said. “Is it a lawsuit from Stephen Miller’s right-wing group that doesn’t live in the real world? Or is it a lawsuit from someone who says you’re discriminating against your work force and can tweet about how sexist or racist you are?” He added, “I’ll take the Stephen Miller poison any day.”



HAIYUN JIANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES

A group run by Stephen Miller, an adviser in the Trump administration, has targeted the policies of several large companies.

More Weight for Essays,  
And Less for SAT Scores?  
Expect a Process to Shift.

By STEPHANIE SAUL

Students may change what they write about in the college essay. And they may no longer be tortured by the SAT and ACT. As for children of alumni? The pressure is on to end their advantage in the admissions game.

The Supreme Court’s ruling on Thursday that ended race-conscious admissions is widely expected to lead to a dramatic drop in the number of Black and Hispanic students at selective colleges. But the court’s decision could have other, surprising consequences, as colleges try to follow the law but also admit a diverse class of students.

The personal essay becomes  
more important.

The Supreme Court made a point of noting that students could highlight their racial or ethnic backgrounds in the college essay. “Nothing in this opinion should be construed as prohibiting universities from considering an applicant’s discussion of how race affected his or her life, be it through discrimination, inspiration or otherwise,” Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. wrote. But Justice Roberts also warned that the essay could not be used as a surreptitious way of telegraphing race. That means college essays may fundamentally change in tone and tenor — and subject matter. “Right now, students write about their soccer practice; they write about their grandmother dying,” said Shannon Gundy, an admissions official at the University of Maryland, in a recent presentation sponsored by the American Council on Education. She added, “They don’t write about their trials and tribulations. They don’t write about the challenges that they’ve had to experience.”

Fewer schools will require SATs  
and ACTs.

In part because of the coronavirus pandemic, about 1,900 colleges and universities dropped requirements for standardized tests at least temporarily, and moved to “test-optional” or test-free admissions. Now some colleges may drop those requirements permanently, responding to critics who say the tests favor students from wealthier families. Eliminating test scores could also protect schools from lawsuits. Students for Fair Admissions, the plaintiff in the Supreme Court cases, relied heavily on data in its case against Harvard. Data released by the College Board, which owns the SAT, reveals that students whose families are in the highest economic bracket score 100 points better than those in the lowest. Racial disparities in test scores are even starker. In 2022, white students scored an average of 1098 while Black students

scored an average of 926. Admissions offices could go even further, like the University of California system, which has gone “test blind,” meaning that it will not look at test scores even if students submit them.

Preferences for the wealthy  
could end.

Most colleges have long resisted eliminating a much-criticized admission practice: giving a boost to the children of alumni, donors and faculty. But that may be harder now. In his concurring opinion, Justice Neil M. Gorsuch criticized Harvard for not getting rid of the preference. And President Biden pledged on Thursday that the Education Department would analyze “practices like legacy admissions and other systems that expand privilege instead of opportunity.” Mr. Biden isn’t the first Oval Office occupant to question legacy admissions. President George W. Bush, who followed his father and grandfather to Yale, said in 2004 that he thought they should be eliminated. Schools generally want to keep these preferences, saying they build community and help in fund-raising. Only a handful of selective colleges have abandoned them, including the California Institute of Technology, Johns Hopkins University and Amherst College.

A new measure of merit:  
adversity indexes.

After the ruling, President Biden also called for “a new standard” to judge applicants. In addition to test scores and grades, he suggested that schools measure the “adversity a student has overcome.” “The kid who faced tougher challenges has demonstrated more grit, more determination, and that should be a factor,” Mr. Biden said. Some schools are already factoring in a student’s background in their admissions process. The medical school at the University of California, Davis, evaluates applicants based on a socioeconomic disadvantage index, or “S.E.D.”

**Colleges will go deep into recruiting.** Selective colleges are used to applicants coming to them. Now, many more will be going out, searching for potential students. The University of Virginia, for example, announced a plan this month to target 40 high schools in eight regions around the state that had little history of sending applicants. An analysis by the university found that only 6 percent of students in the state’s most disadvantaged schools applied.

A University of California program could serve as a model. The program has given academic support and college admissions advice to thousands of high school students in low-income communities.



# Indiana Supreme Court Rules a Near-Total Ban on Abortion Is Constitutional

By KATE ZERNIKE

A ruling by Indiana's highest court on Friday cleared the way for a ban in the state on most abortions from conception.

The court said that the state Constitution guarantees a limited right to abortion, but not a fundamental one — that means allowing abortion only when it is necessary to save a woman's life or protect her from a serious health risk.

The court's decision removes the temporary injunction on a near-total ban on abortion that the state's Republican-controlled legislature passed last August, after the United States Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* and the right to abortion under the U.S. Constitution.

The Indiana case resembles those in other states, where abortion-rights groups have challenged bans passed after *Roe*'s reversal by arguing that varying provisions in state constitutions protect a right to abortion.

On Friday, a federal judge ruled that the bulk of a North Carolina abortion ban after 12 weeks of pregnancy could move forward.

The Indiana high court said that it was trying to resolve what its opinion called the conflict between “two irreconcilable interests”: a woman's decision to end a pregnancy, and the state's desire to protect potential life.

By saying there was a limited but not a “fundamental” right to abortion, the justices left open a door for future lawsuits, but only in cases where a woman's life or health was at risk: “The General Assembly otherwise retains broad legislative discretion for determining whether and the extent to which to prohibit abortion.”

“We celebrate this day — one long in coming, but morally justified,” the state's Republican Attorney General, Todd Rokita, said in a statement.

The coalition of providers and abortion-rights groups that had brought the suit, which included Planned Parenthood and the American Civil Liberties Union, said it was “devastated” by the



An anti-abortion rally at the Indiana Statehouse. The state was the first to pass a ban after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe*.

ruling, arguing that it would deny “essential health care” to 1.5 million people in Indiana, and especially the poor and others who already face hurdles seeking medical care.

“Now, patients will be forced either to flee the state to access abortion if they have the means, seek abortion outside of the health care system, or carry pregnancies against their will with profound medical risk and life-altering consequences,” the plaintiffs said.

Indiana was the first state to pass a ban after the Supreme Court's ruling striking down *Roe*. The emotional two-week legislative debate over the measure dis-

played the divisions — in Indiana and other states — among even Republicans who oppose abortion rights. Some argued that the measure went too far, while others objected that it allowed too many exceptions.

The law bans abortion except in cases of rape or incest, as long as the procedure is not done more than 10 weeks after fertilization; cases of fatal fetal anomalies; and when the mother faces risk of death.

It also requires abortions to be done in certain hospitals, eliminating the licenses for clinics that specialize in the procedure. Doctors who perform illegal abortions

face up to \$10,000 in fines and six years in prison.

Abortion-rights groups had argued that abortion was protected in the first section of the state Constitution, which endows its citizens with “certain inalienable rights” among them “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

As long as the ban was blocked, abortion remained legal in the state until 22 weeks of pregnancy, making Indiana critical to abortion access for women in nearby states that enacted near-total bans. The state became the center of the abortion debate last summer after a 10-year-old rape victim from Ohio, where abortion

was banned, sought an abortion in Indiana.

The Indiana ban is scheduled to take effect on Aug. 1, but the court's decision left a small opening: A separate lawsuit argues that the ban violates a religious freedom act passed in 2015, because some religions permit abortion. A judge in that case put a temporary injunction on the ban in December, and the case is to be heard in September. Until then, those who say that the abortion ban violates their religious liberty can still seek abortions.

The four out of five justices who agreed on Friday to allow the ban to take effect said, essentially, that

## Texas Saw Bump in Births After Abortion Ban Began

By J. DAVID GOODMAN

HOUSTON — For more than a year, since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, pregnant women have faced a radically altered landscape of challenges and choices as the number of abortion providers dropped to zero in more than a dozen states.

But the precise impact of the decision has been difficult for researchers to measure directly, particularly when it comes to a central question: How many more babies are born as a result of abortion bans?

On Thursday, researchers from Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health published one of the first serious attempts at an answer. They focused on Texas, where a law that took effect in September 2021, nine months before the court's *Dobbs* decision, effectively banned abortion at six weeks. The analysis found that the state had nearly 10,000 more births between April and December of last year than would have been expected without the law, or 3 percent more.

The finding, which cheered abortion opponents, could suggest a striking number of pregnancies carried to term that otherwise might not have been, absent the law known as Senate Bill 8.

Researchers watching the new abortion bans around the country have expected a resultant rise in

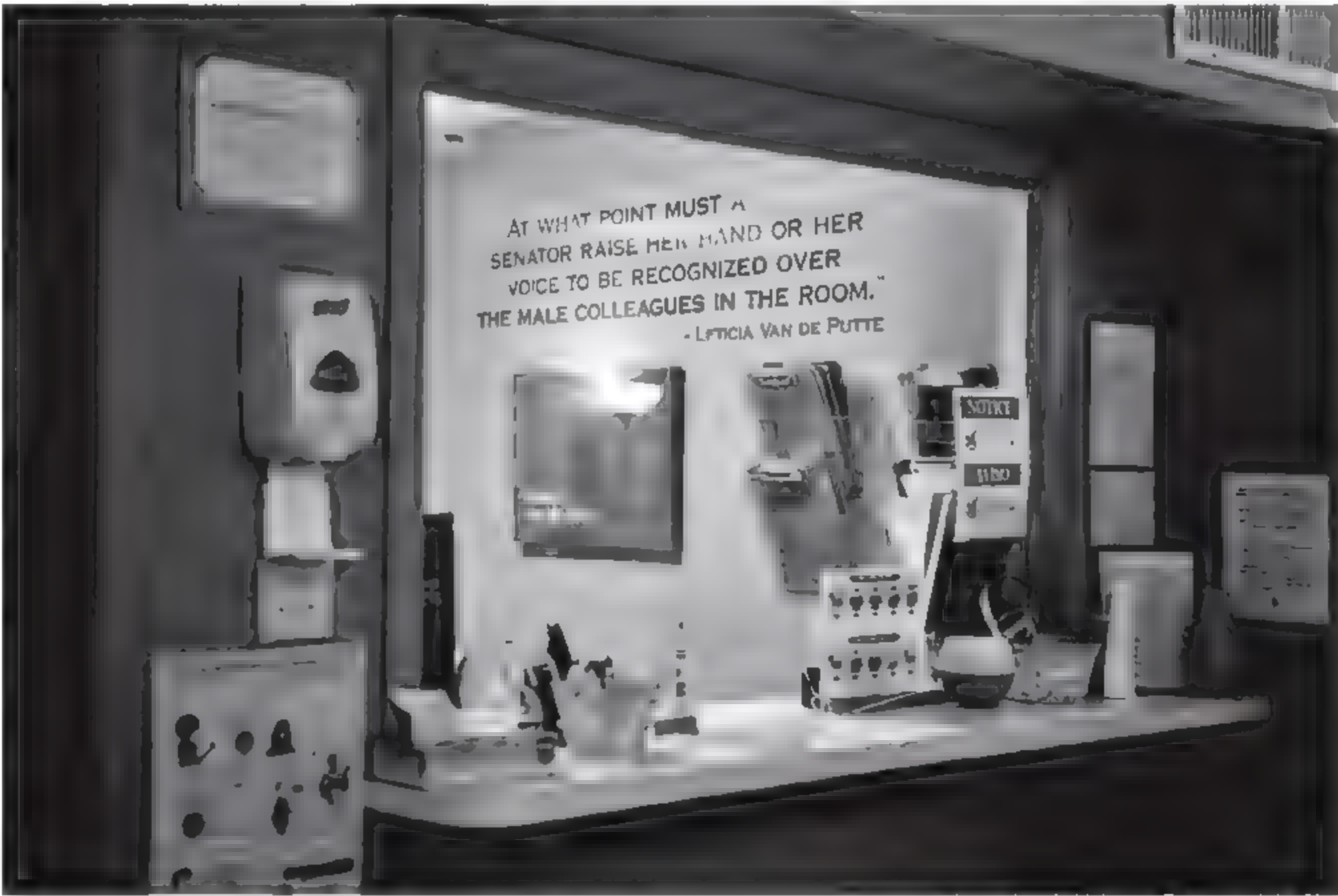
births, but perhaps not one so large.

“It looks like they have demonstrated that births increased more in Texas than we would have expected,” said Caitlin Myers, a professor of economics at Middlebury College who studies abortion but did not participate in the study. “The inference I'm less comfortable making at this point is that all of those excess births are because of S.B. 8. Some of it may be, but I don't think all of it will be. It's just too high.”

The authors of the study, which was published as a two-page research letter in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, also stopped short of attributing their estimated increase in births solely to the unusual law, which allows for civil lawsuits against those who aid abortions after the onset of fetal cardiac activity, usually around six weeks. The results at least suggested that “not everyone who might have received an abortion in the absence of S.B. 8 was able to obtain one,” they wrote.

Still, the authors were confident in their methods and results.

“This pattern was unique to Texas,” said Alison Gemmill, a professor at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and one of the researchers on the study. She said the team looked at each of the other 49 states and Washington, D.C., but found no evidence of differences



CALLAGHAN O'HARE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

from expected birth counts. If there were other explanations for the increase, she added, they would have to be unique to Texas and to the time after the S.B. 8 abortion law went into effect.

Quantifying the effect of abortion bans has been difficult for researchers because of a lag in obtaining detailed data about births.

In other states where abortion bans went into force after the *Dobbs* decision in June 2022, researchers are still collecting vital statistics in order to study the effect of new prohibitions on births. Expectations have been that those bans would have an even greater effect on those seeking

abortions than the S.B. 8 law did in Texas, because many of them prohibited all abortions and were adopted in a large number of contiguous states, making it difficult for women to travel to other states for procedures.

The study published on Thursday, which looked at data back to 2016, relied on provisional birth data for 2022 because fuller data was not available. It did not include demographic information such as the mother's age or race that could be compared to prior years and used to understand other factors that may have played a role.

The researchers then created a

statistical model of what Texas would have looked like without the abortion law. With that, they were able to estimate the number of births that would have taken place in that case.

“This is an indirect way of measuring what we can't measure,” Ms. Gemmill said. “We don't know the decisions behind whether people sought abortions, or whether they weren't able to.”

Broader changes in birthrates have complicated researchers' efforts. The number of births has been lower in recent years in Texas, and across the United States, a trend that was exacerbated at the height of the Covid

*The law, scheduled to take effect on Aug. 1, left a small opening for another lawsuit.*

the Indiana legislature had the right to ban abortion because it had a long tradition of doing so. That tradition was interrupted only “under protest” in 1973 when *Roe v. Wade* established that states could not ban abortion until the third trimester, and then only in limited circumstances.

“Our laws have long reflected that Hoosiers, through their elected representatives, may collectively conclude that legal protections inherent in personhood commence before birth,” the opinion said, referring to Indiana residents, “so the state's broad authority to protect the public's health, welfare and safety extends to protecting prenatal life.”

One justice, Christopher M. Goff, disagreed that the state Constitution did not protect a more fundamental right to abortion, saying that within its “bundle of liberty rights” was “the fundamental ‘right to be let alone.’” He wrote that “many of the liberties Hoosiers take for granted — the right to vote, to travel, to marry, to educate one's children as one sees fit, or to refuse medical treatment — stand on federal precedents that are also now vulnerable to reversal.”

In his dissent, Justice Goff argued that Indiana residents should be allowed to vote on whether they want abortion to be legal, and urged the legislature to put the question on a ballot measure.

A Public Religion Research Institute poll in December found that 61 percent of Indiana residents believed abortion should be legal in all or most cases, and 10 percent believed it should be illegal in all cases, which is in line with public opinion nationwide.

A study found that Texas saw nearly 10,000 more births between April and December of last year than would have been expected without the law.

emergency. But there has been a rise in births since the pandemic in Texas: There were around 389,000 births last year, down from 398,000 in 2016, but larger than the number recorded in 2020.

Other factors may have led to higher birth trends during that time period, Ms. Myers said, including a rise in the number of foreign-born mothers giving birth, many of them in Texas. Ms. Gemmill said that factor was hard to measure without detailed demographic data on births in 2022.

Despite the new restrictions under S.B. 8, many Texas women still obtained abortions, either by having them before the six-week cutoff, by traveling out of state for their procedures or by taking abortion medications on their own. Texas has seen a flood of mail-order pills, and some Texans have been able to get abortions in Mexico.

Still, anti-abortion activists took the Johns Hopkins study as evidence that their success at severely limiting abortions in Texas had produced the desired effect: more pregnancies carried to term.

“Every baby saved from elective abortion should be celebrated!” John Seago, the president of Texas Right to Life, said in a statement. “This new study highlights the significant success of our movement in the last two years, and we look forward to helping the mothers and families of our state care for their children.”

## Trump Investigation Continues After Indictment as Grand Jury Issues Subpoenas

By ALAN FEUER and MAGGIE HABERMAN

Three weeks after former President Donald J. Trump was indicted on charges of illegally retaining national security records and obstructing the government's efforts to reclaim them, a federal grand jury in Miami is still investigating aspects of the case, according to people familiar with the matter.

In recent days, the grand jury has issued subpoenas to a handful of people who are connected to the inquiry, those familiar with it said. While it remains unclear who received the subpoenas and the kind of information prosecutors were seeking to obtain, it is clear that the grand jury has stayed active and that investigators are digging even after a 38-count indictment was issued last month against Mr. Trump and a co-defendant, Walt Nauta, one of his personal aides.

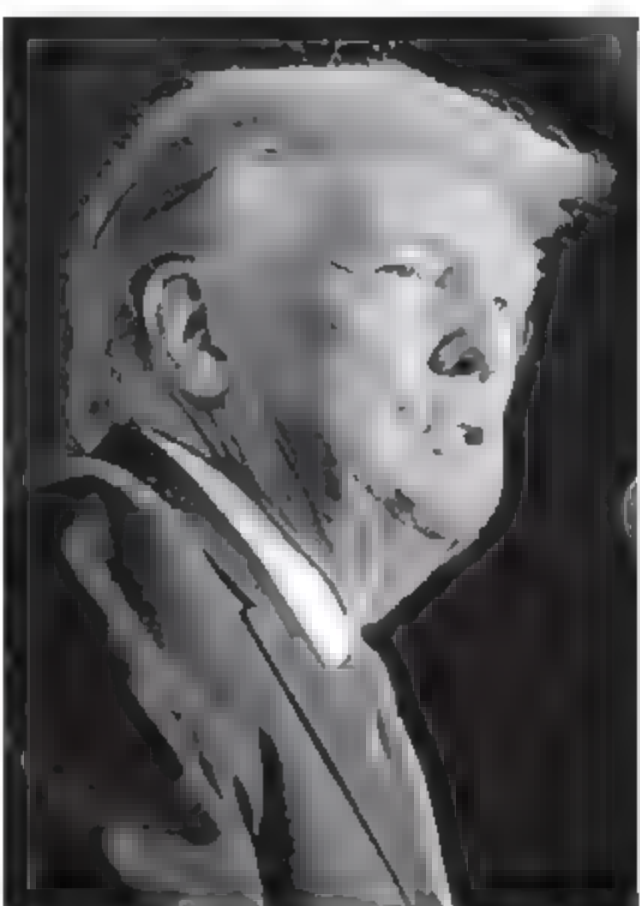
Prosecutors often continue investigating strands of a criminal case after charges have been brought, and sometimes their efforts go nowhere. But post-indictment investigations can result in additional charges against people who have already been accused of

crimes in the case. The investigations can also be used to bring charges against new defendants.

When the office of the special counsel Jack Smith filed the charges against Mr. Trump and Mr. Nauta in the Southern District of Florida, the 49-page indictment offered an unusually detailed picture of the former president holding on to 31 highly sensitive government documents at Mar-a-Lago, his private club and residence in West Palm Beach, Fla. Among the documents were some that concerned U.S. nuclear programs and others that detailed the nation's potential vulnerabilities to attack.

The indictment was strewn with vivid photographs of government records stored in boxes throughout Mar-a-Lago in a haphazard manner. Some of the boxes were piled up in a storage room, others in a bathroom and on a ballroom stage.

Several of Mr. Trump's aides and advisers appeared in the indictment, identified only as Trump Employee 1 or similar descriptions. In one episode, the indictment recounted how Mr. Trump displayed a classified map



JOHN TULLY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Investigators are still digging weeks after former President Donald J. Trump was charged.

to someone described as “a representative of his political action committee” during a meeting in August or September 2021 at his golf club in Bedminster, N.J.

The representative of the PAC was Susie Wiles, one of the top advisers for Mr. Trump's presidential campaign, according to two

people briefed on the matter. A Trump spokesman declined to comment.

Ms. Wiles's appearance in the indictment was reported earlier by ABC News.

The fact that Ms. Wiles could become a prosecution witness should Mr. Trump's case go to trial, even as she is helping run his third bid for office, underscores the complexities that the former president now faces as he deals with both a presidential campaign and a criminal defense with an overlapping cast of characters.

During the meeting with Ms. Wiles, the indictment says, Mr. Trump commented that “an ongoing military operation” in an unnamed country was not going well. He then showed Ms. Wiles, who did not have proper security clearance, a classified map of that country, the indictment says, even while acknowledging that he should not be displaying the map and warning Ms. Wiles “to not get too close.”

Many of Mr. Trump's aides and employees at Mar-a-Lago were questioned as part of the investigation that resulted in his indictment, and Mr. Trump has been

barred from discussing the facts of the case with them even though many work in close contact with him. Mr. Trump has made defending himself against the charges a central part of his political and fund-raising messages, adding to the level of overlap that exists between his legal and political worlds.

Other aides who have been close to Mr. Trump are featured in the indictment, such as “Trump Employee 2,” who has been identified as Molly Michael, an assistant to Mr. Trump in the White House and his post-presidential office. The portion of the indictment describing the transcript of an audio recording in which Mr. Trump described what he said was a plan to attack Iran given to him by the Pentagon lists someone as a “staffer,” whom three people identified as Liz Harrington, a spokeswoman for Mr. Trump.

Some Trump aides and employees who had initially caught the attention of investigators were mentioned in the indictment only in passing.

At one point, for example, prosecutors under Mr. Smith appeared to be focused on Mr. Nauta's deal-

ings with a maintenance worker at Mar-a-Lago, Carlos Deoliveira, who helped him move boxes into a storage room at the compound. The movement of those boxes — at Mr. Trump's request, prosecutors say — ultimately lay at the heart of a conspiracy charge in the indictment accusing Mr. Trump and Mr. Nauta of obstructing the government's attempt to retrieve all of the classified materials in Mr. Trump's possession.

In a previously unreported detail, prosecutors obtained a warrant to seize Mr. Deoliveira's phone as part of their investigation, according to a person familiar with the matter.

Records from the phone eventually showed that Mr. Deoliveira called an I.T. specialist who worked for Mar-a-Lago last summer around the time that prosecutors issued a subpoena to Mr. Trump's company, the Trump Organization, demanding footage from a surveillance camera near the storage room where the boxes of documents were kept.

But Mr. Deoliveira is referenced as “an employee of the Mar-a-Lago Club” in only a single paragraph in the indictment.



# DeSantis and Trump Take Pitches to Rally Of Mothers Group

By ANJALI HUYNH

PHILADELPHIA — Former President Donald J. Trump moved on Friday to outflank Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida as they wrestled for conservative loyalties at a gathering of right-wing activists in Philadelphia, pushing a shared agenda of forcing the federal government to the right, restricting transgender rights and limiting how race and L.G.B.T.Q. issues are taught.

Speaking hours after Mr. DeSantis's address, Mr. Trump aimed to one-up his top rival by vowing to target federal diversity programs and to wield the power of the Justice Department against schools and corporations that are supposedly engaged in "unlawful racial discrimination."

Mr. Trump said that, to "rigorously enforce" the Supreme Court's ruling a day earlier rejecting affirmative action at the nation's colleges and universities, he would "eliminate all diversity, equity and inclusion programs across the entire federal government."

He added that he would direct the Justice Department "to pursue civil rights claims against any school, corporation, or university that engages in unlawful racial discrimination."

A representative for Mr. Trump declined to directly answer a question about which races the former president thought were being subjected to discrimination.

Since entering the race just over a month ago, Mr. DeSantis has repeatedly sought to position himself to the right of Mr. Trump, hitting his record on crime, the coronavirus and immigration. Nevertheless, the former president leads Mr. DeSantis by a wide margin in the polls.

The rare convergence of the two leading Republicans on the campaign trail came at a convention of the newest powerhouse in social conservative politics, Moms for Liberty, which began as a small group of far-right suburban mothers but has quickly gained national influence.

A third presidential contender, Nikki Haley, the former governor of South Carolina, also spoke on Friday, with two others, Vivek Ramaswamy and Asa Hutchinson, slated to appear on Saturday.

Mr. DeSantis went first, headlining the opening breakfast event in a nod to the group's founding in his home state in 2021. Its national rise — it says it now has 275 chapters in 45 states — has coincided with the Florida governor's ascension in right-wing circles as he has



Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida headlined a gathering of Moms for Liberty on Friday, highlighting his recent legislative record.



Nikki Haley, a former United Nations ambassador and governor of South Carolina, emphasized her experiences as a mother.

pushed legislation to restrict discussions of so-called critical race theory, sexuality and gender in public schools.

"What we've seen across this country in recent years has awakened the most powerful political force in this country: mama bears," Mr. DeSantis told the crowd of hundreds, to roars of applause. "We've done so much on these issues in Florida, and I will do all this as the next president."

Shortly after he spoke, the Supreme Court gave the conservative movement more victories with two rulings, one striking down President Biden's program to relieve student loan debt and the other backing a web designer who refused to provide services for same-sex marriages.

Mr. DeSantis's pitch to social

conservatives centers on the idea that he, not Mr. Trump, is the most likely to turn their priorities into legislation. In his 20-minute speech, Mr. DeSantis highlighted legislation he championed in Florida banning gender transition care for minors, preventing teachers from asking students for their preferred pronouns and prohibiting transgender girls from competing in girls' sports.

Ms. Haley, who served as United Nations ambassador in Mr. Trump's administration, struck a different tone later Friday morning. Lacking the kind of recent legislative record that Mr. DeSantis can point to, she instead drew on her experiences as a mother: She directly called herself a "mom for liberty" and often invoked her children.

"Moms care about a lot of things

— it's not just schools," Ms. Haley said. "We care about the debt, we care about crime, we care about national security, we care about the border. Moms care about everything."

Calling itself a "parental rights group," Moms for Liberty has built its platform on contentious issues centering on children — a focus that many on the right believe could help unite the Republican Party's split factions in 2024.

The group has railed against public health mandates related to the coronavirus and against school materials on L.G.B.T.Q. and race-related subjects. Its members regularly protest at meetings of school boards and have sought to take them over.

Along the way, Moms for Liberty has drawn a backlash. The Southern Poverty Law Center, a

left-leaning civil rights organization, calls it an extremist group, saying that it "commonly propagates conspiracy theories about public schools attempting to indoctrinate and sexualize children with a progressive Marxist curriculum." Moms for Liberty leaders rejected the label in remarks on Friday.

Before the group's conference in Philadelphia, a half-dozen scholarly groups criticized the Museum of the American Revolution for allowing Moms for Liberty to hold some of its events there, including the opening reception.

Mayor Jim Kenney of Philadelphia, a Democrat, said on Thursday that "as a welcoming and inclusive city, we find this group's beliefs and values problematic."

Protesters gathered outside the conference venues beginning Thursday night, and demonstrations stretched into Friday evening.

The schedule for Saturday included a session led by KrisAnne Hall, a former prosecutor and conservative public speaker with past ties to the Oath Keepers, a far-right militia that helped orchestrate the Capitol attack on Jan. 6, 2021.

Sessions at the event bridged a wide range of subjects, including exploration of "dark money's infiltration in education" and discussions about the Federalist Papers. But the presidential candidates were the main draw.

Tina Descovich, one of the organization's founders, said in an interview that Moms for Liberty had invited every presidential candidate — including Mr. Biden — to speak at the event.

## This TV Genre Continues to Thrive: GAME SHOWS

From Page A1

median ages of many of the higher-rated entertainment shows in prime time in the most recent television season — "Survivor" (62.1), "Abbott Elementary" (60.2), "The Voice" (64.8) — are not far behind.)

Among adults under 50, the demographic that most interests advertisers, the two game shows draw similar ratings: "Jeopardy!" averages 1.1 million viewers in that bracket and "Wheel of Fortune" one million.

Game shows have been around since the earliest days of television. From the quiz shows of the 1950s to the dating shows of the 1960s and 1970s, game shows have been as much a tradition for American television as football on Sunday afternoons.

The biggest success stories these days are thoroughbreds that have endured decades. "Family Feud," which began in 1976 and is currently hosted by Steve Harvey, draws nearly eight million viewers per episode, one of the highest viewership totals in all of syndicated television, according to Nielsen. CBS announced that "The Price Is Right," hosted by Drew Carey since 2007, will move into a "state-of-the-art facility" in Glendale, Calif., for the show's 52nd season this year.

Beginning in September, ABC's lineup will feature an hourlong edition of "Celebrity Jeopardy!" on Tuesday nights and a full Thursday prime-time lineup of "Celebrity Wheel of Fortune," "Press Your Luck" and "The \$100,000 Pyramid."

Many of the current network prime-time game shows are not exactly ratings blockbusters. But their relatively small budgets make them easy for network executives to swallow, especially compared with the ballooning production costs of scripted television.

Sony's new deal with Mr. Seacrest suggests that the company plans for "Wheel of Fortune" to continue long into the future. The deal is expected to last through the early 2030s, a person who is familiar with it said.

Selecting Mr. Seacrest, however, is not without risk. When Merv Griffin created "Wheel of Fortune" in 1975 as television's answer to hangman, it spent its early years on ratings life support. It wasn't until Mr. Sajak and Vanna White, his co-host, joined in the early 1980s that the show took off. By the mid-1980s, it was drawing more than 40 million viewers a night.

Whether viewers tune out be-

cause Mr. Sajak isn't on the stage is an open question. He and Ms. White both have above-average favorable views among viewers, according to Q Score, the research firm that measures the likability of celebrities. Mr. Seacrest, however, is below average, according to Q Score, suggesting he may be polarizing to a segment of the audience.

Additionally, Ms. White's future



Syndicated episodes of "Family Feud," hosted by Steve Harvey, draw nearly eight million viewers.



Ken Jennings, left, is one of the permanent successors to Alex Trebek as the host of "Jeopardy!"

cause Mr. Sajak isn't on the stage is an open question. He and Ms. White both have above-average favorable views among viewers, according to Q Score, the research firm that measures the likability of celebrities. Mr. Seacrest, however, is below average, according to Q Score, suggesting he may be polarizing to a segment of the audience.

Additionally, Ms. White's future

with the show is uncertain. She is under contract for another year and is in negotiations for a new deal. Puck reported last week that Ms. White made significantly less money than Mr. Sajak and had not gotten a raise in nearly two decades. Many "Wheel of Fortune" fans on social media had expressed hope that she could replace Mr. Sajak — if she departs, will droves of viewers leave with

her?

Mr. Seacrest, though, has repeatedly demonstrated an ability to bring a steady hand to longtime franchises. He successfully took over Dick Clark's long-running New Year's Eve show. He assumed a seat that once belonged to Regis Philbin — as well as Michael Strahan — on "Live," the show he co-hosted for six years with Kelly Ripa. And in 2004 he took over the radio show once hosted by Casey Kasem.

Mr. Seacrest's rapid appointment — Mr. Sajak said only two weeks ago that he would leave "Wheel of Fortune" in 2024 — also is a way for Sony executives to avoid the succession crisis that enveloped "Jeopardy!" two years ago. In 2021, Sony executives quickly pushed out Alex Trebek's successor, Mike Richards, amid a public uproar after sexist and offensive comments Mr. Richards had made surfaced online. Sony eventually named Ken Jennings and Mayim Bialik as Mr. Trebek's permanent successors.

Mr. Nedeff, the game show historian, said that as long as Mr. Seacrest recognized who the true star was, he should be successful.

"The big driver for the show is the game," he said. "The game is the star of the show."

## Santos Makes Appearance, Briefly, in Federal Court

By MICHAEL GOLD and GRACE ASHFORD

While other Republicans prepared to celebrate Independence Day with the traditional red-white-and-blue glad-handing, Representative George Santos found himself in the labyrinth of the American court system, appearing on Friday before a federal judge for the first time since he pleaded not guilty to 13 felonies in May.

Mr. Santos's case is still in limbo, with no trial date yet set. But in a hearing that lasted less than 10 minutes, the prosecution and defense agreed to reconvene on Sept. 7. Mr. Santos and his lawyer said they would spend Congress's August recess poring over the evidence provided by prosecutors thus far — 80,000 pages of it.

Mr. Santos, who wore a gray checked jacket and a light red tie, was silent throughout the proceeding. Gone was the pugilistic defiance that had characterized his news conferences and social media posts. After the hearing, he slid on a pair of dark sunglasses and left the courtroom without speaking to reporters.

Mr. Santos — whose misadventures include a stint at a firm purported to be running a Ponzi scheme, accusations of check fraud in Brazil and Pennsylvania, and lies about everything from college volleyball to the Holocaust — is facing up to 20 years in prison for wire fraud, money laundering and theft of public funds. Mr. Santos, who represents parts of Long Island and Queens, was indicted last month and has pleaded not guilty to all charges.

As Mr. Santos exited the Alfonso M. D'Amato United States Courthouse in Central Islip on Long Island, a group of five protesters began chanting "resign." Among them was Richard Osthoff, a veteran who has accused Mr. Santos of pocketing money intended to save the life of his service dog, Sapphire.

"You killed Sapphire, George," Mr. Osthoff chanted over the crowd as Mr. Santos drew near, adding that he believed Mr. Santos had a "black soul."

In the months since Mr. Santos helped Republicans clinch control of the House of Representatives, he has faced intense scrutiny. In December, The Times revealed that he had falsified much of his life story, spurring inquiries into his business dealings and campaign finances. And while Mr. Santos, 34, has admitted to embellishing his educational and work history, he has refused to resign and pledged to seek re-election in 2024.

Prosecutors say Mr. Santos orchestrated three schemes. They say that during his most recent congressional run, he defrauded donors out of \$50,000 that he used to buy designer goods and cover personal debts. Authorities have also charged him with collecting unemployment funds while employed and lying on his House financial disclosure forms.

Mr. Santos is also under investigation by the House Ethics Committee, which took the unusual step of releasing a status report last week. In it, the tight-lipped committee announced that it had issued more than 30 subpoenas and 40 voluntary requests for information related to Mr. Santos's

financial disclosure forms, business dealings, 2022 congressional campaign and an allegation that he sexually harassed a prospective congressional aide.

The committee also disclosed that it had expanded its probe to cover the accusation in the indictment that Mr. Santos falsely applied for more than \$24,000 in pandemic unemployment benefits while he was working at a Florida-based investment firm.

It is not clear when the Ethics Committee will conclude its work.

Speaker Kevin McCarthy, who enjoys a five-member majority in the 435-member House of Representatives, has declined to join Democrats and some New York Republicans in calling for Mr. Santos's resignation, which would force a special election. But he has also said that he does not believe Mr. Santos should seek re-election, and told reporters that he would consider expelling him, depending on the finding of the Ethics Committee.

## Prosecutors gave the court 80,000 pages worth of evidence.

Last week, Mr. Santos lost a legal battle to stop the release of the names of the two people who guaranteed his \$500,000 bond after news organizations, including The New York Times, argued to make their identities public. His guarantors turned out to be his father and an aunt.

Mr. Santos's father, Gercino dos Santos Jr., and his aunt, Elma Preven, did not have to put up money or property to secure the bond, according to court documents. But they could be financially responsible if Mr. Santos misses a court appearance or otherwise violates the conditions of his release.

Under his bond, Mr. Santos's travel is restricted to New York, Washington, D.C., and places in between. He must obtain advance permission to travel elsewhere, including for political and campaign events.

Mr. Santos did find some small pockets of support on Friday. As he made his way from the courthouse to a brown S.U.V., a middle-aged woman dressed in red approached and handed him a small American flag.

Mr. Santos took the flag and smiled. Then, he slid into his car and sped away.

## Corrections

**NATIONAL**

An article on June 23 about a hearing regarding the derailment of a freight train in Ohio incorrectly rendered some information as a direct quotation. Robert Wood, Norfolk Southern's director of hazardous materials, did not say at a hearing, "Eventually, if we did nothing, the cars were going to go through a violent explosion." That was an element of a question he was asked regarding what he had told the fire chief in East Palestine, Ohio. The article also misquoted Mr. Wood. He said, "We believed that our only alternative left was probably go-

ing to be a vent and burn," not "We believed our only alternative left was a vent and burn."

**WEEKEND ARTS**

A theater review on June 23 about "Once Upon a One More Time" misidentified an actor who portrays one of Cinderella's stepsisters. She is Amy Hillner Larsen, not Ryann Redmond.

**MAGAZINE**

An article on Page 34 this week-end about the evangelical Marcos Witt incorrectly describes the company Gloo. It is a technology platform for ministry leaders, not

a ministry-management app.

An article on Page 40 this week-end about pregnant women on Suboxone misstates the rate at which a substance-exposed baby was born in 2013. It was every 19 minutes, not seconds.

*Errors are corrected during the press run whenever possible, so some errors noted here may not have appeared in all editions.*

Contact the Newsroom  
To contact the newsroom regarding correction requests, please email [corrections@nytimes.com](mailto:corrections@nytimes.com).



# Interim Commissioner For N.Y.P.D. Is Named As Sewell Gets Sendoff

This article is by Dana Rubinstein, Hurubie Meko and Maria Cramer.

Edward Caban, the New York Police Department's first deputy commissioner and an ally of Mayor Eric Adams, will become the interim head of the agency, the mayor said Friday.

"There's a natural process in place that the first deputy commissioner falls in line until we make a permanent announcement on who the commissioner is going to be," Mr. Adams said during a radio appearance on 1010 WINS. "And we are going to find a suitable replacement."

The announcement coincided with the last day in office of Keechant L. Sewell, the department's first female commissioner, who abruptly announced her resignation two weeks ago, after finding that her powers had been circumscribed by the mayor and his allies.

Her departure is one of a wave of high-level officials exiting the still-young administration. The mayor has also lost or is losing his chief housing officer, Jessica Katz, in the midst of a housing crisis; his social services commissioner, Gary Jenkins, in the midst of a record-setting homelessness crisis; his chief counsel, his communications director, his chief efficiency officer, his buildings commissioner and his chief of staff.

Mr. Caban will head the department of 36,000 uniformed officers and 19,000 civilian employees as the mayor conducts a national search for a permanent successor to Ms. Sewell. A spokesman for the mayor declined to detail the criteria that are guiding the mayor's search. But Mr. Adams, a former police captain, is known to have strong feelings about policing and about the close management of his departments.

He likes to repeat an adage he says he learned from his mother: "If you don't inspect what you expect, it's all suspect."

"Now some people may call that a micromanager," he said after Ms. Sewell resigned. "I call it being the mayor of a city that you love."

Mr. Caban, a father of two young children whose own father was a New York City Transit Police Department detective, began his career in the Bronx in 1991. He was handpicked for the department's second-highest job not by Ms. Sewell, but by Mr. Adams, according to several current and former officials.

His record is not unblemished. In 1997, the Civilian Complaint Review Board, a city oversight agency, recommended that he be disciplined after two officers were accused of cursing and threatening a woman in front of her young son in Harlem. Mr. Caban,



The interim head, Edward Caban, center, is a second-generation officer whose rise has been marked by disciplinary incidents.

then a sergeant, "abused his authority," according to the board, when he refused to give the woman their names.

Still, he rose through the ranks. In 2005, he was promoted to captain and in 2006 was made commander of the 25th Precinct, according to the department.

That same year, the board found again that he had abused his authority as a captain when he had stopped a man on a Manhattan street while investigating robberies. When the man refused to provide identification, Mr. Caban arrested him for disorderly conduct. The man was later released.

As Mr. Caban's temporary appointment was announced, Ms. Sewell was spending her last hours on the job. She spoke to an auditorium filled with Police Department personnel receiving promotions, as well as their family and friends, at the Police Academy in College Point, Queens.

It was likely her final public act at the helm of the nation's largest police department.

During her short tenure, Ms. Sewell made a strong impression on the Police Department rank and file — championing renovations of precinct break rooms, and trumpeting the successes and challenges of individual officers.

On Friday, she asked the police officers there to think deeply about the legacies they wanted to create.

"What do we give back?" she asked. "What do we take away from this calling, this mission, this responsibility? And what positive changes do we leave behind?"

Throughout Friday's nearly two-hour ceremony, the crowd erupted in applause and cheers several times. All the while, Ms. Sewell, a guarded and measured personality, sat smiling broadly. By the end, she had tears running down her face.



An eight-year investigation found that 18 Hasidic schools were not offering their students adequate instruction in English and math.

## Many Yeshivas Are Breaking the Law, City Concludes

From Page A1

measure the efficacy of yeshiva education by applying a skewed set of technical requirements."

"Utilizing a government checklist devised and enforced by lawyers may help explain the state of public education," he said. "It is designed to obscure rather than illuminate the beauty and success of yeshiva education."

Advocates for yeshiva reform said they were cautiously optimistic about what the findings would yield.

"We hope that the completion of this investigation compels the city and Mayor Eric Adams to act on behalf of thousands of students who are being deprived of their right to a sound basic education," said Beatrice Weber, executive director of Yaffed, the group of former students and parents whose complaints gave rise to the investigation.

The action by the city follows reporting by The New York Times that found that scores of all-boys Hasidic schools in Brooklyn and the lower Hudson Valley had denied their students an adequate secular education, and that teachers in some of the schools had used corporal punishment to enforce order.

The Hasidim, a fervently religious segment of the larger Orthodox Jewish community, operate more than 200 gender-segregated schools of varying quality across the state. Boys schools, in particular, provide less secular education than girls schools do, focusing instead on the parsing of religious texts. The city investigation examined complaints about more than two dozen schools in Brooklyn that collectively enroll thousands of children.

After being informed of The Times's reporting, Mayor Eric Adams, a longtime ally of the city's Hasidic leaders, promised to com-

plete the investigation into the schools, which began in 2015 under his predecessor, Bill de Blasio.

The results of the city's investigation were summarized in letters sent to state education officials on Friday. Of the 18 schools the city found to be deficient, officials made a final determination that four were breaking the law. The city recommended that the state make the same determination about the remaining 14. Under the law, the city has the power to make final determinations about some private schools but not others. A spokesman for the state Education Department said officials there were reviewing the city's recommendations.

City officials also said five other

### The schools offer intensive religious lessons in Yiddish.

schools they investigated were complying with the law only because of their affiliations with state-approved high school programs. Those schools will not face additional scrutiny.

Just two of the more than two dozen schools the city investigated were found to be in compliance with the law based on the quality of their instruction, echoing preliminary findings issued by the de Blasio administration late in 2019. One of the schools was a yeshiva for girls.

In the letters summarizing the investigation, officials described visiting schools and finding deficiencies in course planning or proof of teacher training. In some cases, officials reported seeing no instruction at all in core subjects.

After multiple visits to Oholei Torah in Crown Heights, one of the largest yeshivas in the state, inspectors said they had found "in-

sufficient evidence that teachers have the appropriate knowledge, skill and disposition to deliver" adequate secular instruction.

At another school, Bnei Shimon Yisroel of Sopron in Williamsburg, inspectors noted a complete lack of English-language instruction in reading, spelling, writing, math, geography, history, civics and science.

Representatives of those schools did not respond to messages seeking comment.

On Friday, the former yeshiva student who founded Yaffed, Nafituli Moster, said he felt gratified by the findings.

"Ten years of my adult life have been spent attempting to recover what I was never provided in my childhood," Mr. Moster said. "This report is vindication of our efforts, and offers a promise to children today that their inadequate education will not go unnoticed, and may yet improve."

Over the past eight years, the city investigation has faced a number of hurdles. In conducting the review, the de Blasio administration often deferred to a lawyer representing the yeshivas, The Times found, giving the schools advance notice of visits and allowing the lawyer to accompany inspectors.

Some of the schools put off the inspections for years, and city officials later acknowledged that they did not understand what they were supposed to be evaluating in the classrooms they did inspect.

Mr. de Blasio also engaged in "political horse-trading" by delaying the release of the preliminary findings on the schools, according to a report by the city's Department of Investigation. The preliminary findings were released just before Christmas 2019.

In recent years, the state education commissioner, Betty Rosa, has increased enforcement efforts to ensure that yeshivas provide a basic education.

Last fall, Ms. Rosa overruled the city's recommendation that a Hasidic boys school in Brooklyn

be found in compliance with the state law. She sharply criticized the city inquiry into that school, found that it was breaking the law and ordered it to come up with an improvement plan.

The New York State Board of Regents also passed new regulations last year, which were advanced by Ms. Rosa and laid out consequences for schools that failed to provide a basic education.

Still, those rules had been watered down after years of protest from Hasidic leaders. They were further weakened earlier this year when a judge hearing a lawsuit brought by some yeshivas ruled that the state could not close schools for being noncompliant. The state regulations also give schools a lengthy timeline to show their attempts to make improvements before facing further consequences.

Mr. Adams has frequently praised the yeshivas, particularly in recent weeks as the investigation has neared its conclusion. The Department of Education conducted the investigation using its own staff members, but as mayor, Mr. Adams controls the department.

"Instead of us focusing on how do we duplicate the success of improving our children, we attack the yeshivas that are providing a quality education that is embracing our children," Mr. Adams said in May while addressing a crowd of yeshiva administrators.

During a June visit with Hasidic leaders, he offered another strong defense of the schools.

"It's unfortunate that those outside your community don't understand that all you want to do is live in peace, educate your children and be able to provide for your community," Mr. Adams said. "I know that because, as I stated, I'm not a new friend, I'm an old friend, and old friends respect each other."

Then he accepted a plaque from Hasidic leaders thanking him for protecting yeshivas.

## U.S. Coast Guard Apologizes For Sexual Assault Coverups

By KAROUN DEMIRJIAN and JOHN ISMAY

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Coast Guard apologized on Friday for covering up scores of documented sexual assault and harassment cases that took place at the service's academy, and failing to properly investigate or discipline those accused in dozens more cases over a span of nearly two decades.

The nature of the incidents, which took place between 1988 and 2006, was disclosed to the Senate Commerce, Justice and Science Committee last week during an informal briefing, according to two Democratic senators who sent a letter on Friday to the Coast Guard's commandant, Adm. Linda L. Fagan, demanding more details.

According to Senators Maria Cantwell of Washington, the panel's chairwoman, and Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, an internal Coast Guard review called "Operation Fouled Anchor" determined that 62 incidents of rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment either took place at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn., or were committed by cadets during those years.

Those cases may only be part of the problem. According to the letter, Coast Guard officials told senators during the briefing that their internal inquiry had yielded another 42 cases of rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment that were never properly investigated. The letter said officials also revealed what Ms. Cantwell and Ms. Baldwin called a history of leaders who "discouraged survivors from filing formal complaints or otherwise disclosing their assaults."

Coast Guard officials acknowledged the internal investigation, which was conducted between 2014 and 2020, after details of the inquiry were reported by CNN on Friday.

In a statement, a Coast Guard spokesman apologized to the victims, saying that "by not having taken appropriate action at the time of the sexual assaults, the Coast Guard may have further traumatized the victims, delayed access to their care and recovery, and prevented some cases from being referred to the military justice system for appropriate accountability."

But the apology was unlikely to extinguish simmering fury on

Capitol Hill about the scope of the assaults and the secrecy with which the Coast Guard carried out its internal inquiry into them, both of which Ms. Cantwell and Ms. Baldwin said in their letter were "disturbing."

Among the most troubling revelations they cited was a lack of disciplinary action against the perpetrators of sexual assaults. At least two senior officers found to have committed such offenses were allowed to retire with a full pensions and unadulterated access to veterans' benefits, which they still maintain. The senators also expressed outrage that those two officers had been recommended to the Senate for promotions while they were under investigation, while the allegations against them were never disclosed.

"It is unclear how many other officers had substantiated claims against them, were not disciplined, and remained in positions of leadership or management," Ms. Cantwell and Ms. Baldwin wrote.

The Coast Guard also disclosed that officials failed to update the personnel records of individuals who were determined to have carried out assaults and incidents of harassment, the senators said, omissions that could have allowed certain individuals to pass background checks they might not otherwise have cleared.

The senators said that some had described the Coast Guard's failure to disclose its investigation as "intentional."

Congress has been scrutinizing problems of sexual assault in the military services for years, recently passing legislation to take decisions about charging perpetrators out of the chain of command. The issue flared anew this year, after the Pentagon published statistics showing student-reported assaults at West Point, the Naval Academy and the Air Force Academy rose to record levels in the 2021 academic year.

Data from the Coast Guard Academy was not included in that report; while the Coast Guard is part of the armed forces, it is housed at the Homeland Security Department.

A Coast Guard spokesman said that the service had made "major improvements" in how officials investigate reports of sexual assault in recent years, and is "creating a culture to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment."

## Louisiana's Governor Vetoes Gender-Transition-Care Ban

By RICK ROJAS

ATLANTA — Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana vetoed a ban on gender-transition care for transgender minors on Friday, standing in the way of his state becoming the latest to prohibit that kind of care.

He also vetoed two other recent bills related to gender expression and sexual orientation in schools and among young people.

### Background

The medical measure would forbid hormone treatments, puberty blockers and gender-transition surgery for people under 18.

The other two bills would restrict what teachers can discuss in class on the subject of gender, and limit the ability of transgender and nonbinary students to have school personnel refer to them by pronouns that do not match the sex listed on their birth certificates.

The transition-care ban took a bumpy road to the governor's desk. One attempt to pass the bill failed in the Senate Health and Welfare Committee because a Republican lawmaker and pharmacist, Fred Mills, voted against it. Proponents tried again in a different committee, where the bill advanced.

### Why It Matters

Proponents of the ban on transition care say it is meant to protect children from treatments that are risky and unproven, and have long-term consequences for the patients. More than 20 Republican-led states have pushed through legislation restricting rights for transgender youth and adults, with nearly all of those states enacting comparable bans on transition care.

Several federal judges have either temporarily or permanently blocked enforcement of some of those laws, citing, in part, concerns about the constitutionality of targeting that specific type of medical care.

Mr. Edwards, who had vowed to block his state's bills, argued that they would harm a small population of young people who are uniquely vulnerable. In a pair of notices vetoing the school-related measures, he urged lawmakers to show compassion toward transgender youth and warned against putting in place what he described

as discriminatory and flawed policy.

But Mr. Edwards, the only Democratic governor in the Deep South, saved the most disdain for the ban against transition care. In an unusually lengthy six-page letter to senior lawmakers, he wrote that the measure was "so blatantly defective on so many levels that brevity is impossible."

"I believe that time will show that this veto was not just an exercise in compassion and respect for transgender children and their parents, but it was also the only legally responsible action to take because it is what is constitutionally required of me," he concluded.

### What's Next

All three bills passed the Republican-dominated Legislature by margins wide enough to override the governor's veto. But the legislative session ended recently, so that can't happen right away.

Under Louisiana law, the lawmakers could reconvene after about 40 days for a special session to consider overriding vetoes.

Lawmakers did not hold an override session last year, even though Mr. Edwards had vetoed more than two dozen bills, and it remains unclear whether they will this year. But several Republicans, including those eager for their party to reclaim the governorship next year, have signaled that there may be enough support to override this recent slate of vetoes.

More National news appears on Page A20.

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Alex Lemonides contributed reporting.



COLUMNIST | DAVID FRENCH

# Christians and Drag Queens Both Defend the First Amendment

I’M MOSTLY DONE with my legal career. In 2015, after more than 20 years of full-time litigation, I hung up my courtroom spurs and moved into the world of writing and thinking for a living. But every now and then, I re-enter the fray.

Last year I wrote an amicus brief in a case called 303 Creative L.L.C. v. Elenis, arguing that a wedding website designer had a First Amendment right *not* to speak. And on Friday the Supreme Court reached a decision in the case, ruling for the website designer and holding that the State of Colorado could not require her to design websites that, for example, celebrated same-sex weddings.

Thus case was not, as it has been widely described, about whether a website designer could refuse gay customers. That would be both illegal and immoral, and I would not participate in such a case. Indeed, the parties stipulated that the web designer, Lorie Smith, was “‘willing to work with all people regardless of classifications such as race, creed, sexual orientation and gender,’ and she ‘will gladly create custom graphics and websites’ for clients of any sexual orientation.” She was simply not willing to design websites that contained messages that violated her religious beliefs.

The case was not about whether a business could refuse to provide goods or services but whether it could refuse to generate specific expressions with which it disagreed. Here the parties agreed that “all of the graphic and website design services Ms. Smith provides are ‘expressive’” and that “websites and graphics Ms. Smith designs are ‘original, customized’ creations that ‘contribute to the overall messages’ her business conveys.”

As a result, no one should think that the Supreme Court sanctioned, say, whites-only businesses or permitted a business owner to slam the door shut on gay and lesbian customers. Indeed, the majority opinion was written by the same justice, Neil Gorsuch, who wrote the majority opinion in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, which extended the reach of Title VII to protect gay and lesbian Americans from employment discrimination.

The 303 Creative case was instead about compelled speech. When could the government require a commercial provider of expressive services to say things she found objectionable? Could the government compel a portrait artist to paint a heroic picture of a white supremacist? Could the government compel a speechwriter to pen an anti-gay screed on behalf of a right-wing politician?

Under traditional First Amendment doctrine, the answer was a clear and emphatic no. The First Amendment doesn’t just protect my right to say things I believe, it also protects my right not to say things I don’t believe.

As Justice Gorsuch wrote in the court’s majority opinion, “The opportunity to think for ourselves and to express those thoughts freely is among our most cherished liberties and part of what keeps our Republic strong.” And when one does encounter objectionable speech, he said, “tolerance, not coercion, is our nation’s answer.”

In ruling for Ms. Smith, the court didn’t set any new precedent. It was a straightforward application of decades of cases protecting citizens from compelled speech. But these clear precedents were clouded by the culture wars. When one passionately supports a community or a cause, there is a natural human inclination to want to protect your speech while suppressing your opponents’ speech — or in this case, your opponents’ right not to speak at all.

Make no mistake, this is a bipartisan phenomenon. As I’ve written before, parts of red America have engaged in wholesale



DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES

**A much-watched Supreme Court case wasn’t about refusing gay customers. It was about the right not to speak.**

acts of censorship designed to suppress speech about race, sexual orientation and gender identity that many conservative Americans find distasteful. In the run-up to the Supreme Court’s decision in 303 Creative, two federal courts, in Tennessee and Florida, struck down restrictions on drag performances, holding that the states’ efforts to target drag shows violated the First Amendment.

Indeed, Florida has been a locus of unconstitutional culture warring. The administration of Gov. Ron DeSantis currently faces court injunctions against the governor’s efforts to override private social media corporations’ ability to moderate their own websites, regulate corporate diversity training and regulate university instruction regarding race.

A fundamental reality of American First Amendment law is that it is sustained and defended by outsiders, people who are typically unpopular in their own communities. Sometimes that lack of popularity is well earned and enduring. When American Nazis demanded to march through Skokie, Ill., for example, they deserved every drop of

the public condemnation they received. But they still retained their constitutional right to speak.

But sometimes lonely stands look better over time. When two Jehovah’s Witness sisters refused to say the Pledge of Allegiance in their public school classroom during World War II, they were decidedly unpopular. But their courage resulted in one of the most remarkable statements of constitutional principle in American history, from the Supreme Court’s 1943 ruling in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*: “If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.”

In a nation as polarized as our own, the definition of “outsiders” can vary wildly, depending on where they live. In one community, conservative Christians may dominate, and be tempted to censor speech they dislike, to “protect children” or defend the “common good.” In other communities, those same Christians will find their own

speech under fire as “hateful” or “discriminatory.”

The consequence is an odd legal reality, an artifact of our divided times. Christians and drag queens — in different jurisdictions and in different courts — are both protecting the First Amendment from the culture wars. They’re both reaffirming a foundational principle of American liberal democracy: that even voices on the margins enjoy the same civil liberties as the powerful and the popular.

In his majority opinion, Justice Gorsuch stated the case well. “In this case,” he wrote, “Colorado seeks to force an individual to speak in ways that align with its views but defy her conscience about a matter of major significance.”

The state does not possess such power. It must not possess such power. Otherwise the culture wars will consume the Constitution, and even our most basic rights to speak or not speak will depend on whether we can gain and keep political control. That is not the vision of American pluralism, and it is not the vision that will sustain a united, diverse American republic.

COLUMNIST | PAMELA PAUL

# Do Not Panic. It’s Just a Moral Panic.

NOT TO FREAK YOU OUT, but you may be in the middle of a moral panic.

A moral panic is the pervasive belief that some great wickedness is threatening society and must be stopped. *Calling* something a moral panic is a way to argue that people’s fears or concerns are silly and baseless and that any effort to address them must be stopped.

The latter may now be the bigger problem.

Consider the spate of moral panics supposedly afoot. According to the panic police, if you are worried about children and social media, you are succumbing to moral panic. If you’re troubled about your employees ruining the corporate brand on TikTok, that’s right: moral panic. Trepidations about artificial intelligence, crime, teenage Juul use, policing, gender ideology, privacy, self-driving cars, feminism, A.D.H.D., racism — moral panics, all.

Moral panics have existed since well before the Salem witch trials — perhaps the paradigm case. But thanks in part to social media, they are increasing in number and changing in nature. While moral panics have always served a political function, stoking passions and naming scapegoats, accusing someone of fomenting a moral panic has itself become a political tool, a way to delegitimize the opposition as somehow foolish and hysterical.

These back-and-forth accusations of whipping up moral panics didn’t exist before

social media, according to Nachman Ben-Yehuda, who with Erich Goode wrote “Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,” a seminal book on the subject. “When one group decides to stigmatize another group, social media gives a chance for those people to respond and make similar accusations and themselves exaggerate,” Ben-Yehuda, a professor emeritus and the former dean of the faculty of social sciences at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, told me.

Though moral panics have a long history, the concept was first defined in the 1972 book “Folk Devils and Moral Panics” by the British sociologist Stanley Cohen. “Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic,” Cohen wrote, adding: “Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight.”

This isn’t to say that moral panics start for no reason. They often arise in response to a genuine issue. But the extent and significance of the problem is exaggerated. As Cohen explains: “This labeling derives from a willful refusal by liberals, radicals and leftists to take public anxieties seriously. Instead, they are downgrading a politically correct agenda: to downgrade traditional values and moral concerns.”

Consider the feminist fight against pornography in the 1970s and ’80s. Many people dismissed the anti-pornography crusade as a moral panic because some of its

gravest charges — for example, that pornography would lead to a greater incidence of rape — turned out to be false. But that doesn’t mean all aspects of the “panic” were unwarranted. “Is pornography degrading to women? Yes. Is it in other ways undesirable? Yes,” Goode, who is now a sociology professor emeritus at Stony Brook University, told me. “There’s a range of concerns in any moral panic.”

Many moral panics emerge on the political right, which has long styled itself as protecting traditional moral values. But the left has helped fan the flames, too. Take the “recovered memory” scandal of the 1980s, in which children were encouraged to remember instances of childhood sexual abuse, but that abuse often never happened. Psychotherapists, feminists and educators on the left joined together with conservative Christian groups to stoke fears of an epidemic of satanic worship and sexual predation that were later shown to be wildly exaggerated.

The irony — wait for it — is that those accusing others of moral panics are often the most proselytizing of moralizers themselves. It’s the loudly homophobic politician caught having sex with another man in a bathroom all over again. The chutzpah is almost admirable.

There’s a pre-emptive-strike quality to contemporary accusations of moral panic: “You better not get worked up about this or you’re just another pearl-clutching matron.” You’re “concern trolling.” These kinds of characterizations mirror what sociologists

**Making a concern seem overwrought is an easy way of undercutting it.**

refer to as techniques of neutralization.

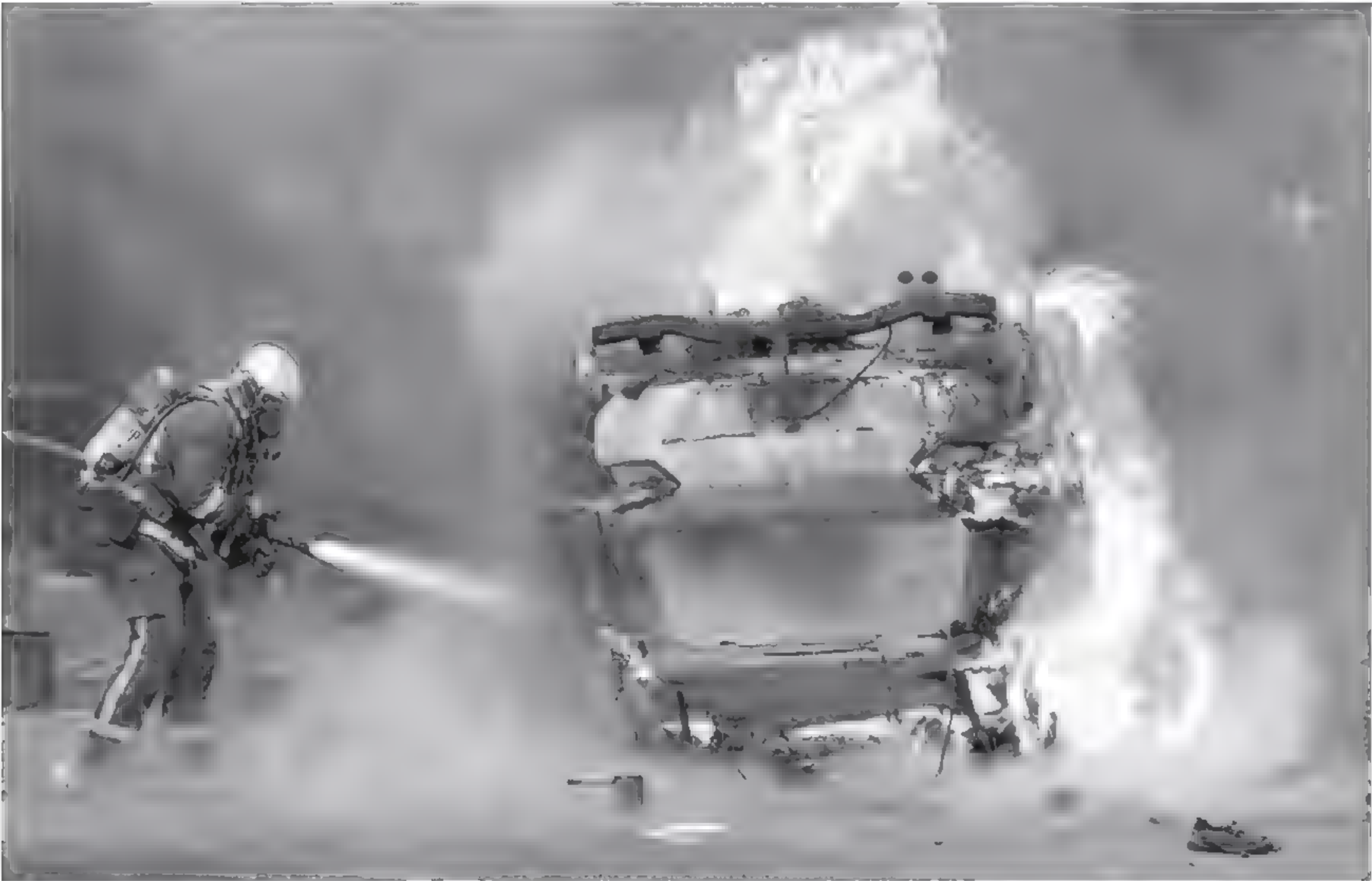
Say you’re a liberal parent concerned about open cannabis use outside your kids’ elementary school. If you express any reservations, your opponents will say you’re succumbing to moral panic and somehow in cahoots with a right-wing cabal or being manipulated by one. The goal in exaggerating and distorting the opposition’s concerns is to nip them in the bud.

An accusation of moral panic is a little bit the boy who cried wolf and a little bit “I know you are, but what am I?” It takes advantage of a polarized landscape by caricaturing anyone who takes issue with a social, cultural or political development as some kind of raving fanatic. It causes people across the political spectrum, particularly in the broad, reasonable landscape of liberals, centrists and principled conservatives, to question their own convictions. And it effectively distracts them.

“I’m sure a lot of accusations of moral panic are made that are iffy because it’s a way of dismissing the gravity of the concern,” Goode said. “The seriousness of the charge seems less serious if you say, ‘Oh, it’s just a moral panic’ — and poof, it’s gone.”

So perhaps you *are* in the middle of an alleged moral panic. The best response may be not to get distracted by what anyone labels your concerns and to focus instead on the actual problem that needs addressing. You might even do something about it — and that’s what panics the scolds trying to stop you most of all.





MAIN: LEONARDO AGENCY / FRANCE PRESSE. GETTY IMAGES

# France Is on Fire

Harrison Stetler

A journalist who writes about French politics and culture.

PARIS

“I’m a fully grown adult, but my mother still seems nervous whenever I leave the house,” Djigui, one of the thousands of protesters who took to the streets on Thursday afternoon in Nanterre, a working-class suburb of Paris, told me. “I can hear the crack in her voice when she checks to make sure I have my ID card or just says, ‘Watch out.’”

In Nanterre, on Tuesday, this concern turned out to be a matter of life and death. Nahel M., a 17-year-old male of Moroccan and Algerian descent, was fatally shot by a police officer at a traffic stop, setting off a countrywide revolt over police violence and racism.

Over the next several nights, protests erupted in spectacular fashion. From Toulouse and Lille to Marseille and Paris, groups of protesters sacked police stations and looted or vandalized scores of businesses, hurling Molotov cocktails and setting off barrages of fireworks at public buildings and the riot police. Nearly 1,000 people have been arrested.

The anger shows no sign of abating. The killing of Nahel M. — which to many appeared more like a summary execution — exposed the most extreme form of the police violence that has long targeted communities of color in France. It has also acted as a catalyst for the discontent simmering throughout the country. For President Emmanuel Macron, it was another blow to his authority, as he was forced once again to confront a France on fire.

Still, the killing of Nahel M. might have ended up as little more than a secondary news item. Early press accounts portrayed the police officers as acting in self-defense, shooting an erratic driver willing to plow through officers to escape custody. This version of events would have placed the officers under the protection of a 2017 law, passed by Mr. Macron’s predecessor, François Hollande, that loosened police restrictions on

the use of firearms in cases where a driver refuses to stop at an officer’s order. (This law has been cited as one cause of an uptick of fatal police shootings, which rose to a peak of 52 deaths in 2021 from 27 in 2017.)

But cellphone footage taken by a bystander quickly shifted the narrative. The video, which surfaced soon after the killing, shows two officers standing beside the vehicle, one aiming his pistol toward the driver’s window at point-blank range. Though it’s unclear who uttered them, the words “I’m going to put a bullet in your head” can be made out before the car began to accelerate and the fatal shot was fired. Nahel M. died an hour later.

The government’s first reflex was to portray a cautious sensitivity, in the hope of avoiding the type of street flare-ups that are often called a “contagion” of the banlieues —

## The country is in the midst of a revolt over police violence and racism.

the economically depressed, multiracial urban areas that experience the brunt of French policing.

“Nothing justifies the death of a young person,” Mr. Macron said on Wednesday, calling the actions of the police “inexcusable” and “inexplicable.” For Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, the officers’ conduct was “clearly not in conformity with the rules of engagement.”

That’s probably as far as the president will go. After all, the government rarely takes opportunities to engage seriously with the problem of police violence. Mr. Macron has tended to attribute deaths at the hands of the police to the regrettable errors of individual public servants. In December 2020, when Mr. Macron made the relatively blunt concession that “someone with a skin color that isn’t white is much more likely to be subjected to searches,” he was rebuked by France’s powerful police unions, whose members refused to carry out traffic stops and ID checks.

Part of the problem is Mr. Macron’s relationship to the police. Since coming to office in 2017, the president has relied on the police forces, cementing their central role in French political life.

The spate of protests rejecting Mr. Macron’s various social reforms — most recently of the pension system — has been countered by a heavy use of the police. During the worst of the pandemic, police officers were the frontline executors of Mr. Macron’s stringent lockdowns and curfews. Now that the police forces are at the center of a national controversy, it is no surprise that Mr. Macron’s hands are tied.

Then there’s the political pressure from the right. Trumpeting a presumption of “legitimate self-defense,” many figures on the right are calling for the government to unapologetically clamp down on protesters. The “poll of the day” for Thursday on the website of the conservative daily *Le Figaro* asked, “Is it time to decree a state of emergency?” Behind that question lurks the memory of 2005, when weeks of riots after the deaths of two young men of color during a police chase led to the use of France’s emergency powers law.

They may yet get their wish. With Mr. Macron’s efforts to achieve social “appeasement” clearly in ruins, the hard-liners in his coalition, such as the tough-on-crime interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, are likely to be strengthened. At a cabinet crisis meeting on Thursday, Mr. Macron suggested as much when he castigated rioters for their “unjustifiable violence against the institutions of the republic.”

He’s half right. These protests are against the institutions of the republic, and one in particular. For many French people, especially marginalized young men of color, Nahel M.’s killing is the latest demonstration of the intrinsic violence of the police — and beyond it, evidence of a society that wants little of them and would rather they disappear. But they, and their anger, are not going anywhere.

“We’re exhausted and just strung out by stories like this,” Djigui, the protester, told me. “For years, France has been like a pressure cooker.”

This week, it exploded.

# By Killing 11 Jews, He Killed Something Else, Too

Mark Oppenheimer

The director of open learning at American Jewish University and the author of “Squirrel Hill: The Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting and the Soul of a Neighborhood.”

DURING the first phase of the trial of Robert Bowers, who was convicted of the 2018 murders of 11 Jews in Pittsburgh at the Tree of Life synagogue building, I kept thinking about the testimony of Stephen Weiss. Mr. Weiss, a retired public school science teacher and longtime ritual director for Tree of Life, was one of the 11 people who survived the attack.

He told the court a month ago that in the years since the event, “We don’t have the same attendance.” He explained that the synagogue lost members who could be counted on to make the minyan, the essential quorum of 10 Jews required for certain prayers. “They were killed.”

The murder of any human being is infinitely terrible, but the murder of a Jew in synagogue has a special quality: It makes the tiny minority of Jews who show up for one another at worship — who make the minyan — even smaller.

That loss has unique ramifications, which may not be apparent to the nonobservant. We cannot say prayers for the dead without 10 present. We cannot marry. We cannot read from a Torah scroll. We can’t do Judaism without 10 Jews. And while at bar mitzvahs and weddings those 10 are easily gathered, it is the daily and weekly ritual that is essential to both the griever and the celebrators alike.

There is a tendency, when discussing the Pittsburgh massacre, to draw lessons that feel widely applicable, not limited to the case of Jews: demands for tighter gun laws, rallying cries against “white supremacy” and pleas for interfaith cooperation. These universalist appeals make the deadliest antisemitic attack in American history an occasion for well-meaning policy advocacy or moral uplift. To believe in them, you don’t need to know, or care, anything about Jews specifically.

Even the discussion about whether Mr.

Bowers should be sentenced to death — the trial is now in its penalty phase, and under federal law he can receive a death sentence if his actions were “hate crimes” or obstructed the free exercise of religious beliefs resulting in death — feels a bit abstract. After all, what does it mean to obstruct religious practice?

For Jews, something quite specific. Because there are numerous religious practices that we cannot do without a quorum of 10 (the Orthodox would say 10 Jewish men, while Reform, Reconstructionist and Conservative Jews would say 10 Jewish adults), the loss of those stalwart, often unsung members of the community radically alters our literal ability to observe.

In David Bezmozgis’s 2004 short story “Minyan,” Itzik, an elderly immigrant in a building of elderly immigrants, dies. Itzik was a regular at the building’s in-house synagogue; he consistently helped make the minyan. Zalman, the synagogue’s lay leader, has the sway to bump people up on the list for newly vacant apartments, and those angling for a place to live — a vacancy is a rare thing in subsidized housing — promise Zalman that if he gives them the apartment, they will come to services, help make the minyan, like the departed Itzik.

The catch is that Itzik had a roommate, Herschel, who also attends services faithfully. It has been whispered that the two men were more than roommates. But Herschel is not on the lease. So the question is whether to let Herschel stay in the apartment or to evict him and move in a purportedly more respectable Jew, one not gossiped about, not suspected of questionable behavior — but who may not be a minyan regular.

At the end of the story, the narrator, the grandson of one of the building’s residents, asks Zalman if he will cave to those who want Herschel evicted.

“You want to know what will happen to Herschel?” Zalman replies. “This. They should know I don’t put a Jew who comes to synagogue in the street.”

Is Herschel gay? Who cares? He shows up. He puts his body on the line.

Robert Bowers did not just deprive those he murdered of their lives. He deprived them of the opportunity to practice their religion — what’s more, he obstructed the religious practice of those who depended on the victims’ presence. And because the murders were committed early on a Sabbath morning, soon after the synagogue building opened, the people caught in his gunfire were reliable attendees, the ones who showed up early, who kept the community running.

Two of the Jews killed that morning, Richard Gottfried and Daniel Stein — members of New Light, a small congregation that

## The Pittsburgh gunman killed a minyan, and our religious practice changed.

rented space in Tree of Life — were cornered and shot in the basement kitchen while preparing food. They would have been returning to services shortly to make the minyan.

The jurors will decide whether to give Mr. Bowers the death penalty. Those who support putting him to death may argue that his execution would deliver some sort of justice for the 11 he killed. But it will do nothing for those who cannot say Kaddish for a loved one because the 10th person at the minyan, the one who would have permitted the prayers to be said, is now underground.

Tree of Life and its two tenant congregations all lost members in the shooting, and they all have struggled to replace these loyal minyan-makers. On the days when a synagogue gets to nine Jews, what is needed is another Jew who comes early, is reliably present, is simply there. Such a Jew can be pious or agnostic, observant or wayward. A Jew like me, or like you. A Jew like Herschel.

### LETTERS

## The Affirmative Action Debate Isn’t Over

TO THE EDITOR:

Re “Justices Rule Against Affirmative Action” (front page, June 30):

While I share the outrage directed at the Supreme Court’s striking down affirmative action, as the founder and director of a preschool day care center and having devoted my life to early childhood interventions, I know that the starting point for creating equality in this country was never at the college level.

The reason affirmative action has been necessary to equalize college admissions is that the needed resources have not been spent to prepare children for learning when they first start formal schooling. Children of color from disadvantaged backgrounds need quality preparation to develop attitudes, skills and behaviors that are essential to eventually passing their classes, graduating and writing a college application.

While protesting the recent Supreme Court decision is cathartic, the real solution to providing a diverse population ready for college is to pour more resources into early schooling and a variety of parent supports. Then a wider demographic will be qualified and admitted and can enjoy the fruits of higher education.

There is nothing deficient in the children’s smarts, just their preparation.

J. SUSAN CEDAR, SANTA FE, N.M.

TO THE EDITOR:

I was a graduate of the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) Program of the City University of New York, earning a B.A. in 1972. The program supported a robust college education for students who were racially and/or financially disadvantaged. I was very fortunate to be accepted, and the experience was a turning point in my life.

There is no doubt that affirmative action works to strengthen our society in all aspects. The ruling against it is unjust, and the court should be ashamed of its immoral conduct.

RONALD BRINN  
GREAT NECK, N.Y.

TO THE EDITOR:

There is a simple solution to the Supreme Court’s rejection of race-based affirmative action, and it has been in operation for decades in the California State University system. C.S.U. operates an Equal Opportunity Program that provides education access and opportunity for low-income and educationally disadvantaged students.

The vast majority of students admitted are in the racial minority groups targeted by affirmative action. But there are also some white and Asian students who are admitted under the program who have documented the disadvantages they have suffered.

To my knowledge, this program has never been challenged in court, and if it were, it is unlikely that the courts would rule against it. Universities and colleges that can no longer operate their affirmative action programs should adopt the C.S.U. system.

TERRENCE DUNN  
VANCOUVER, WASH.

The writer is a retired institutional research director in the California State University system.

TO THE EDITOR:

The Supreme Court has actually done Black people (and America) a huge favor by giving them the opportunity they deserve to compete and achieve on their own merits and not be second-guessed that what they have achieved came through affirmative action.

## Regretful Justices?

TO THE EDITOR

Re “Might the Anti-Abortion Justices Have Regrets?” (Opinion guest essay, June 24):

Linda Greenhouse wonders whether the five far-right conservatives who formed the majority in the Dobbs case might have regrets that they caused a life-threatening denial of health care for women in red states.

She concludes, not even a twinge of regret. But no doubt they have deep regrets that they have caused electoral harm to the politicians and conservative social movement to which they have fidelity and are in servitude.

DAVID SCHLITZ, WASHINGTON

Now starts the real challenge, a Marshall Plan to equip Black people with the education, the counseling, the tools and the support that they need to succeed. This involves getting our hands dirty in the trenches, instead of doing it on the cheap, with reverse racism.

SAMUEL BAHN, NEW YORK

TO THE EDITOR:

The Supreme Court’s rejection of affirmative action in college admissions will effectively reduce the chances for poor and disadvantaged kids to attend prestigious institutions of higher learning. It is now only fair that “legacy admissions,” which give preferential admissions and advantages to kids of rich alums and donors, be banned also. What’s good for the goose is good for the gander.

SUBIR MUKERJEE  
OLYMPIA, WASH.

TO THE EDITOR:

It is far easier to hate people who don’t look, sound or love like you if you’ve never been exposed to them. Among the many advantages of affirmative action in colleges, it allowed students from homogeneous backgrounds and communities to experience diversity for the first time. It afforded them the opportunity to appreciate that different doesn’t necessarily mean bad, an invaluable lesson that nothing but experience can teach.

The Supreme Court ruling that struck down affirmative action in U.S. colleges means that lesson will play a demonstrably less significant role in students’ education, and hatred of the unknown may surge in its absence.

TOM TEMPLETON  
CLIFTON PARK, N.Y.

TO THE EDITOR:

I find myself a very lonely liberal, applauding the court’s decision.

For me the silver lining in this decision is that our society can now begin the important work to excise and eradicate the notion of race from our thinking.

We have discussed or paid lip service over the years to the fact that race is an artificial construct. We are all the same species, and some of us have lighter or darker skin or hair of differing textures and a variety of other outward facing features.

And there is every reason to believe that smart, well-intentioned people will find innovative ways to promote diversity and help people catch up to where they would have been socially and financially but for historic injustices and built-in disadvantages.

This is a rare opportunity to turn old moldy lemons into the sweet restorative lemonade of progress and humanity. U.N.C. and Harvard, let’s get going and move that ball down the field toward a social goal long overdue.

STEVEN SEECHÉ  
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

TO THE EDITOR:

Re “Admissions Could Be Even More Selective” (front page, June 30):

It is all but impossible to have a sober, unbiased discussion about affirmative action, and this includes justices of the Supreme Court.

Why? Because it assumes that we can use reason and law to arrive at justice. Discrimination is pervasive because it has nothing to do with reason. Chief Justice John Roberts famously wrote in a 2007 ruling, “The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.” It will not stop. Sorry, Chief Justice Roberts.

We are a tribal species with prejudices based on race, gender, sexuality, nationality, language, height and more. When has it been otherwise? No matter the law, no matter what we say or what laws we enact, discrimination and prejudice will continue.

CHARLES MERRILL, NEW YORK

TO THE EDITOR:

Possible winners resulting from the Supreme Court’s ruling on affirmative action in college admissions? The hundreds of high-quality but nonelite colleges and universities that admit a much higher percentage of qualified applicants than Harvard or the University of North Carolina, and that also offer the opportunities and upward mobility that come with a college degree.

HELEN MANGO, TINMOUTH, VT  
The writer is a professor of geology and chemistry at Castleton University.



# Judge to Decide Whether C.I.A. Torture’s Taint Stretched to Guantánamo

**By CAROL ROSENBERG**

GUANTÁNAMO BAY — More than 22 years after Al Qaeda bombed the U.S.S. Cole and nearly 12 years after a prisoner was first charged with plotting the attack, a judge heard final arguments Friday on a fundamental question in the pretrial phase of the case: Can the accused bomber’s confession, after years in C.I.A. custody, be used against him?

The judge, Col. Lanny J. Acosta Jr., acknowledged that potentially relevant information was still being given to defense lawyers in the case, but he said it was time to resolve a key obstacle in the long wait for the death-penalty trial of Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri. Colonel Acosta will retire from the Army in September and has been determined to wrap up a portion of the pretrial phase focusing on the legacy of C.I.A. torture.

In closing arguments, he confronted several issues straight on, including whether what the C.I.A. did to the defendant — waterboarding him, depriving him of sleep, holding him nude in solitary confinement — constituted torture or cruel and inhuman treatment.

“I do not concede that at this time,” replied Edward R. Ryan, a prosecutor from the Justice Department.



LYLE G. BECKER U.S. NAVY VIA GETTY IMAGES

The bombing of the U.S.S. Cole killed 17 U.S. sailors in 2000.

By day’s end, however, Mr. Ryan acknowledged that the Justice Department had already conceded that what Mr. Nashiri told interrogators in C.I.A. custody “should be treated as ‘statements obtained by the use of torture or by cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.’”

Nevertheless, Mr. Ryan argued that, once at Guantánamo, Mr. Nashiri voluntarily took part in three days of interrogations by government agents in 2007 — and incriminated himself “about his role in the sneak attack bombing of the U.S.S. Cole that resulted in the death of 17 naval service members.”

Mr. Ryan devoted much of his argument to reading from a 34-page account of the interrogation by federal agents and intercepted communications from the prisoner in the months after he reached Guantánamo Bay that cast him as a boastful and at times arrogant prisoner who spoke to his interrogators freely.

To illustrate that Mr. Nashiri understood this, Mr. Ryan quoted from intercepted advice Mr. Nashiri gave another prisoner at Guantánamo that “meeting with these people is not mandatory. Deny everything.”

But rather than deny everything, Mr. Ryan said, the defend-

ant admitted to being “Bilal,” a man who rented a house and moved money used in the attack by two suicide bombers on the American destroyer in a harbor in Aden, Yemen, on Oct. 12, 2000.

Annie W. Morgan, a defense lawyer, portrayed the Saudi prisoner as a broken man at the time of his 2007 interrogations. He had already been interrogated 200 times in C.I.A. custody and had no reason to believe that “another American in another polo shirt” coming to question him would not hurt him.

“There is nothing voluntary when you assess the totality of the circumstances,” Ms. Morgan said. She reminded the judge that Mr. Nashiri’s questioning by different interrogators — so-called clean teams — at Guantánamo in 2007 was held in Camp Echo, the same facility on the U.S. Navy base that had served earlier as a secret C.I.A. prison, a black site.

Mr. Nashiri was held there in 2003 until he “was kicked out of Guantánamo Bay for behavior issues,” she said. He was sent to another C.I.A. black site, this one in Europe, as punishment and “was raped,” she said, referring to the time a C.I.A. employee forced a breathing tube into his rectum in a discredited medical procedure. Four months after his return to Guantánamo in September 2006,

the F.B.I. carried out the interrogations in Camp Echo, which had been repurposed for military use.

The judge asked about testimony and records from 2006 and 2007 that portrayed the prisoner at the time as projecting free will, sometimes belligerent, controlling the pace of interrogations and aware of his rights.

Ms. Morgan pointed to the U.S. government’s recent disclosure of a secret cache of videos of Mr. Nashiri being forcibly removed from his cell in 2006 and 2007. “This is someone who has given up,” she said. Some of the videos were screened for the judge on Friday in a classified portion of the closing argument that excluded both the public and the defendant.

She also cited a recently disclosed C.I.A. “exploitation plan” from 2004 that described Mr. Nashiri as not able to engage in conversation, struggling to answer yes or no questions and showing signs of dyslexia.

A crux of the question confronting the judge is the principle of attenuation, how to get an untainted confession after a coerced one. Mr. Ryan said the “clean team interrogations” at Guantánamo in 2007 met the legal standard of a change in time, change in place and change in identity of the questioner.

Judge Acosta sounded skeptical. He said legal precedents were based on episodes that did not compare to what happened to Mr. Nashiri in the black sites. At one point, he ticked off this list of his treatment: “The waterboarding, the box, the walling, the slaps, etc., the way in which he was shackled, solitary confinement, no bedding, concrete floor, stripped, shaved.”

After a pause, he added, “sleep deprivation.”

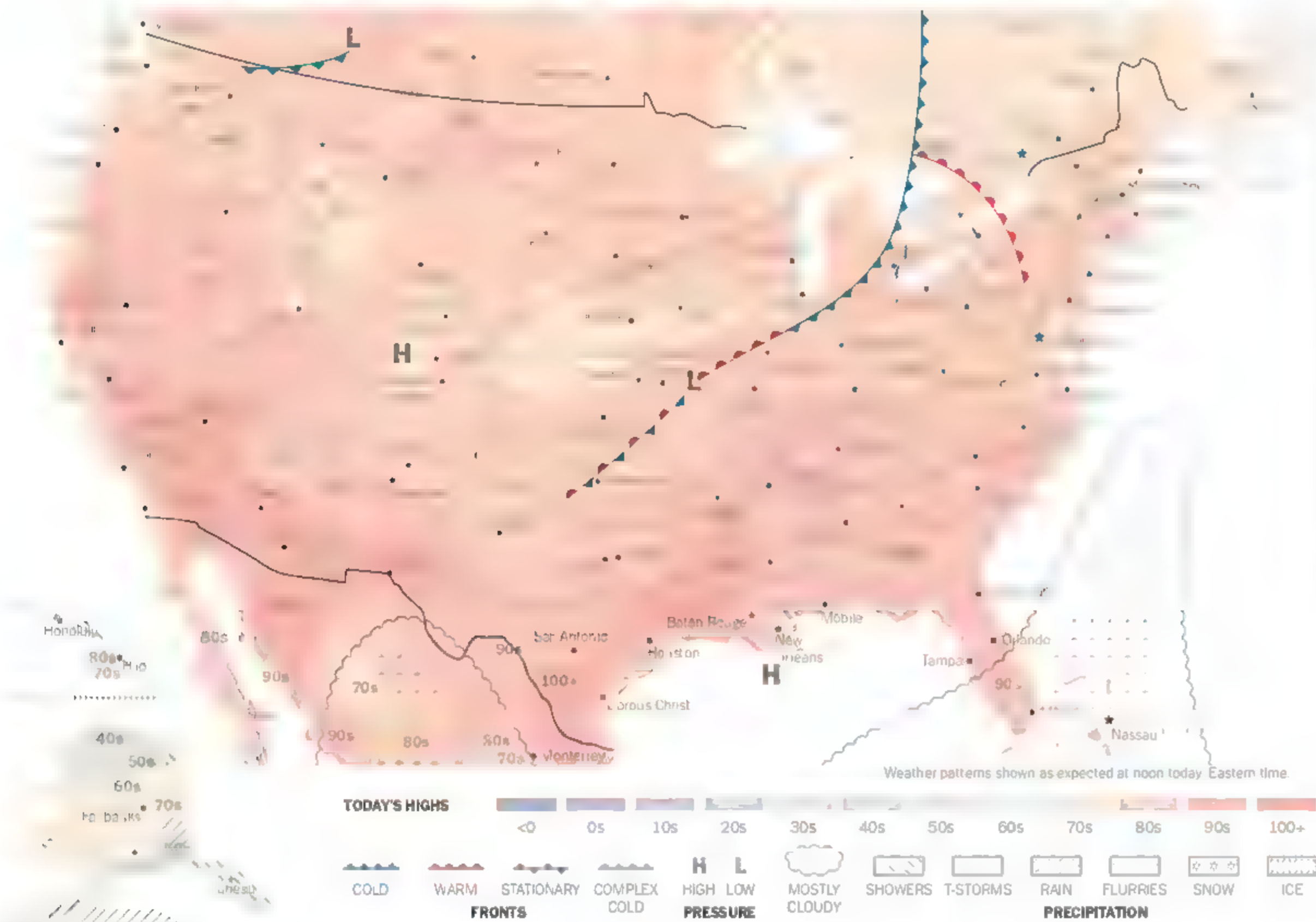
The judge cited testimony from the psychologists who as C.I.A. contractors waterboarded Mr. Nashiri in Thailand in 2002. They had said their “enhanced interrogation techniques” were intended to create a social contract — as long as the prisoners cooperated, they would not return to “the bad times.”

The judge acknowledged this week that prosecutors were still finding and preparing classified evidence for the case, including more videos from Guantánamo that were being sanitized of certain national security secrets before the judge and defense lawyers could see them.

Colonel Acosta had earlier indicated that the three-week hearing that ended Friday would be his last on the case, and that he would issue rulings on key questions until his retirement.

## Weather Report

Meteorology by **AccuWeather**



### Highlight: Strong Thunderstorms Later Monday

Slightly less humid air is expected to create a line of strong to severe thunderstorms from western New England to the Middle Atlantic Coast Monday afternoon and evening. The strongest thunderstorms may produce damaging wind gusts in excess of 50 miles per hour, small hail, and flash flooding. There is also the potential for airport delays.



### National Forecast

Severe thunderstorms are possible from eastern Kansas and Missouri to Ohio, West Virginia and western Virginia. Storms may bring lightning strikes, high wind gusts, hail and flash flooding.

Farther north, showers and spotty thunderstorms are predicted from southern Nebraska to the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and upstate New York. A few severe thunderstorms are also likely in Oklahoma and northwestern Texas.

Much of the Southeast will feel steamy as the Northeast turns warmer and more humid, but smoky conditions should ease in some places.

Much of the zone from the Pacific Coast to the Rockies and the northern Plains will be dry, with sunshine. The West will have typical early-July heat.

### Metropolitan Forecast

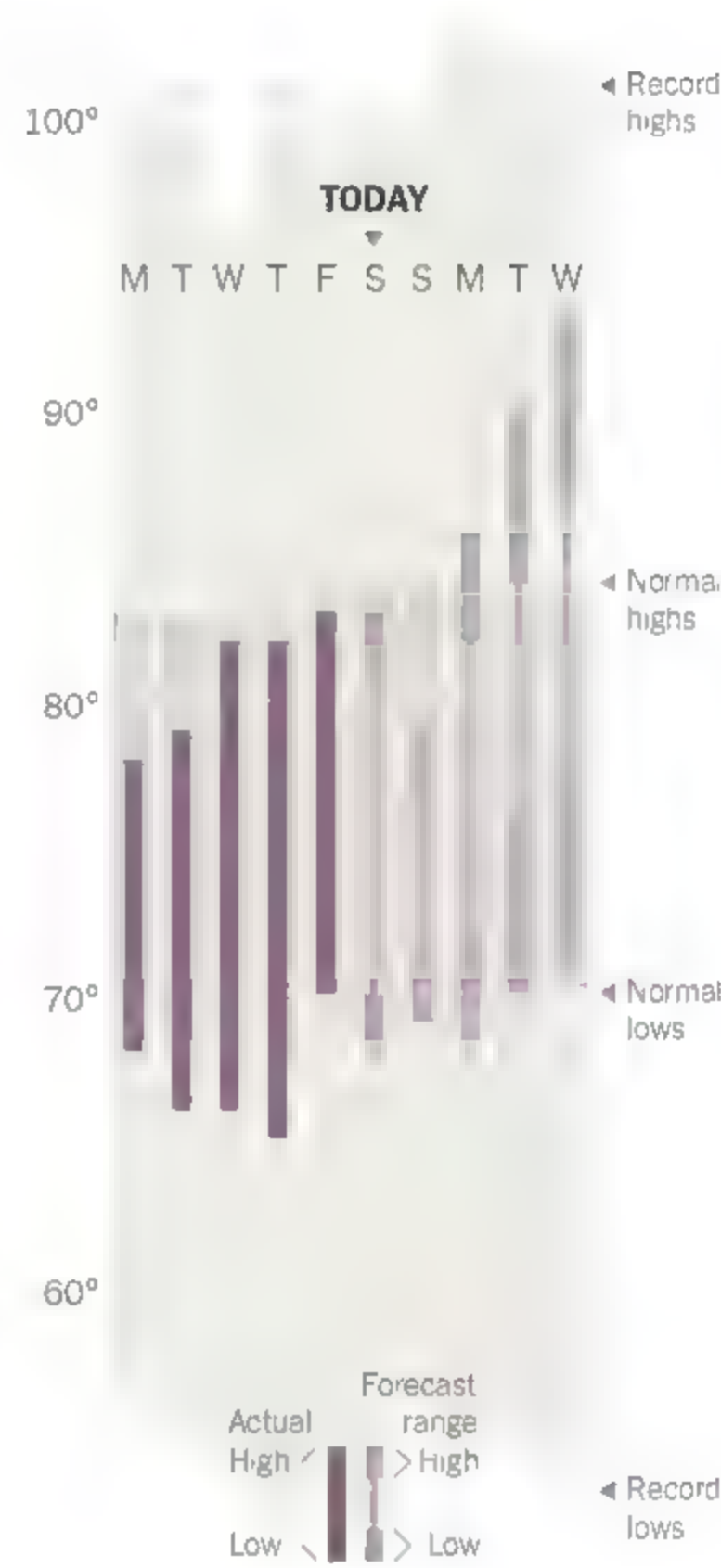
**TODAY** .....Afternoon thundershowers  
High 82. It will be humid, with variable cloud cover. Thundershowers will occur during the afternoon. Smoke from Canadian wildfires could affect air quality.

**TONIGHT** .....Humid, with thunderstorms  
Low 69. Thunderstorms are expected to remain. Skies will be mostly cloudy and it will be humid. Winds are expected to be 4 to 8 miles per hour.

**TOMORROW** .....Heavy thunderstorms  
High 78. Skies will be mostly cloudy and it will be humid, with a few heavy thunderstorms. There will be some improvement in air quality as a result of a reduction in wildfire smoke.

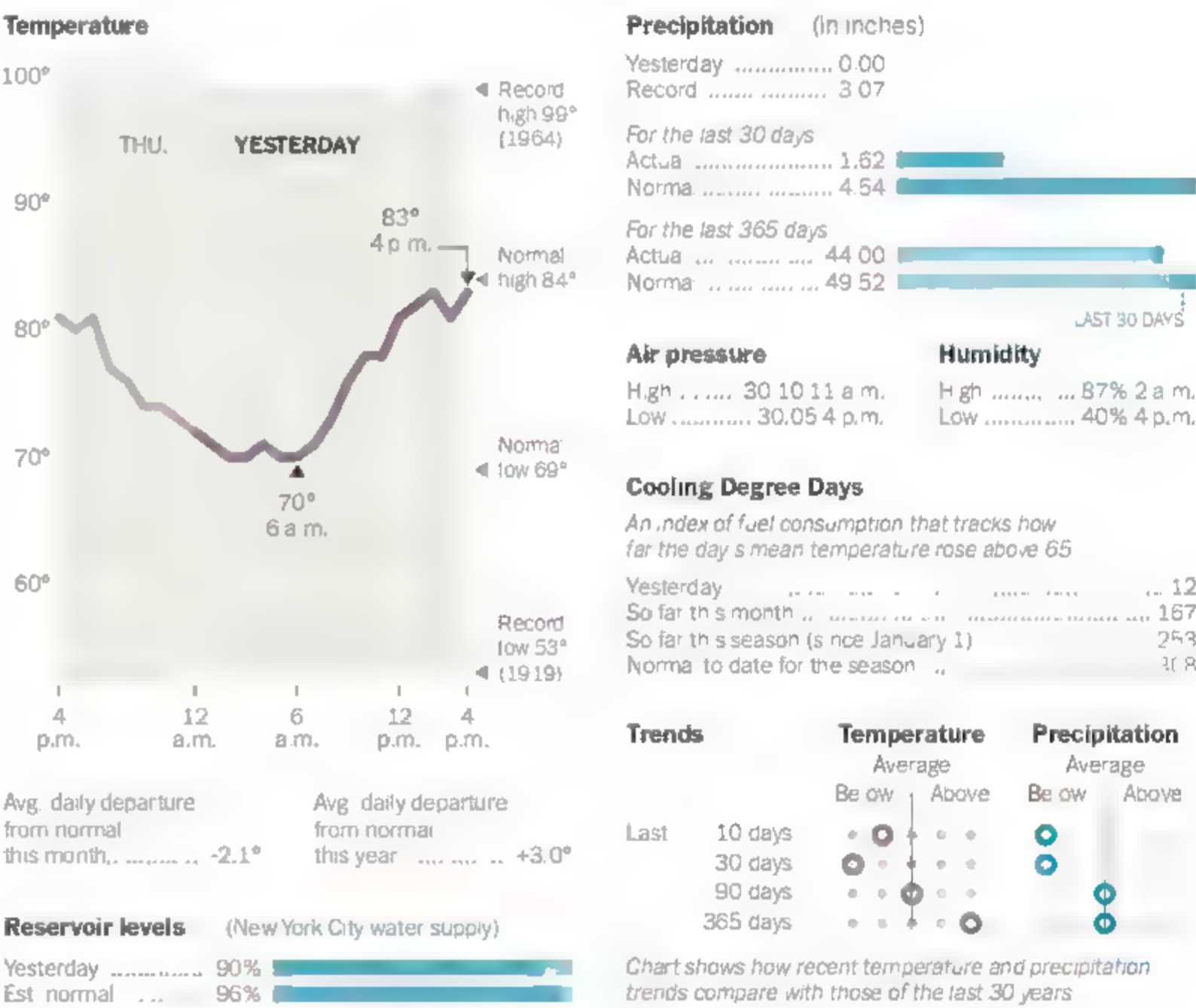
**MONDAY** .....Heavy thunderstorms  
There will be variable cloudiness throughout the day as a few heavy thunderstorms move through. High 84. Winds are expected to be 4 to 8 m.p.h.

**TUESDAY** .....Sunshine and thunderstorms  
On Tuesday, skies will be partly sunny, with thunderstorms in the afternoon. High 87. On Wednesday, skies will be mostly sunny. High 90.

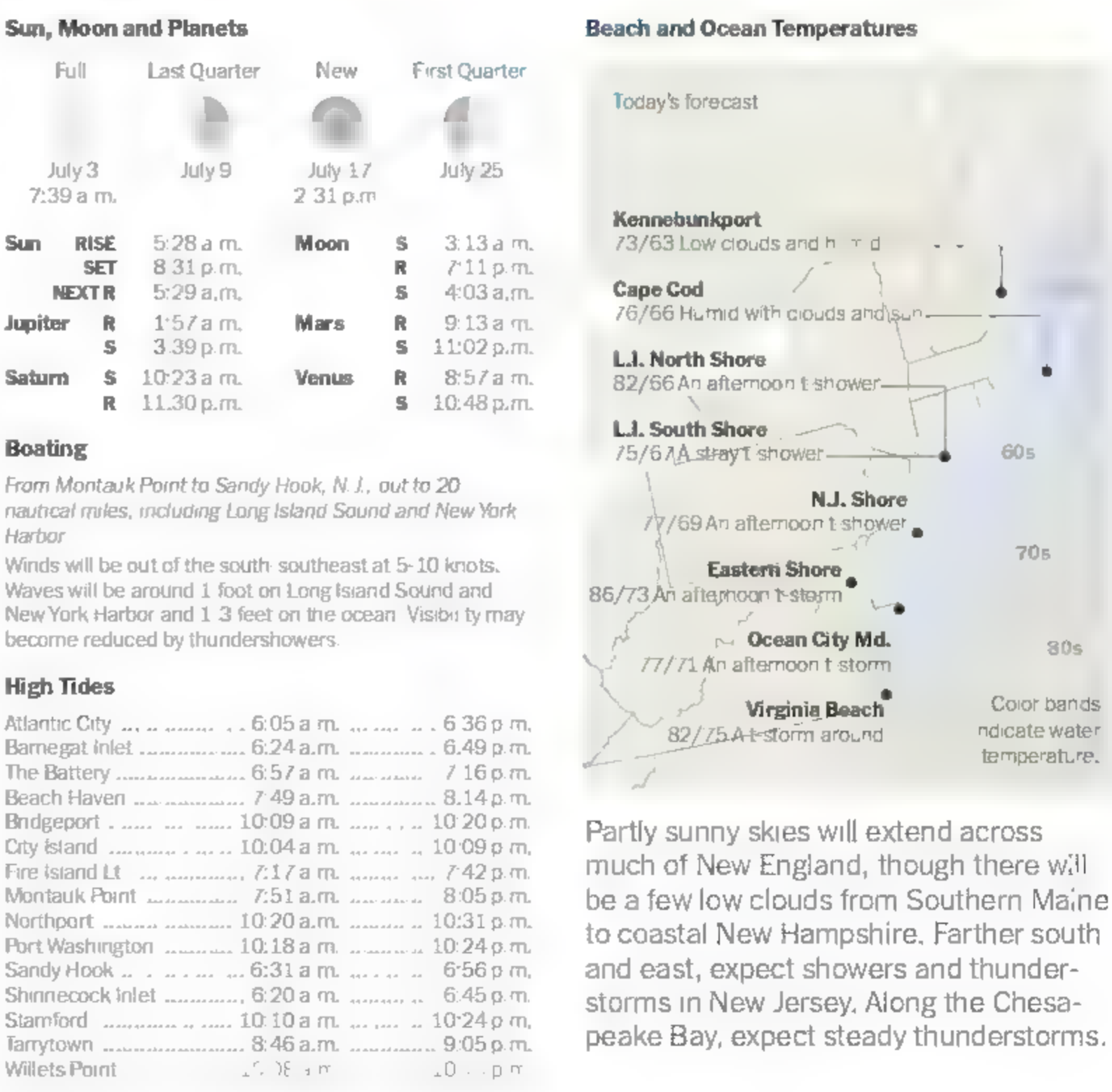


### Metropolitan Almanac

In Central Park, for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday.



### Recreational Forecast



Cities				Little Rock				New Delhi				Europe				North America			
High/low temperatures for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday. Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.				101/ 80 0				98/ 77 PC				91/ 79 0.11				94/ 79 PC			
C ..... Clouds				80/ 61 0				84/ 63 S				111/ 83 0				112/ 86 PC			
F ..... Fog				93/ 76 0.15				91/ 72 T				89/ 71 0.04				87/ 70 PC			
H ..... High				99/ 80 0				95/ 75 T				87/ 77 1.20				86/ 77 1			
I ..... Thunderstorms				90/ 78 0.27				90/ 78 0.27				88/ 79 0.29				88/ 79 0.21			
PC ..... Partly cloudy				90/ 69 0.08				83/ 64 C				68/ 46 0				68/ 46 0			
R ..... Rain				88/ 68 0				90/ 71 PC				93/ 79 0.21				93/ 79 T			
Sh ..... Showers				92/ 74 0.15				94/ 69 T				100/ 81 0				100/ 74 S			
S ..... Snow				97/ 78 0				96/ 79 S				86/ 76 0.21				85/ 74 T			
SS ..... Snow showers				84/ 70 0				91/ 76 T				85/ 79 0				79/ 58 0.03			
T ..... Trace				95/ 71 0				90/ 69 S				87/ 72 0				87/ 72 S			
W ..... Windy				81/ 66 0.36				90/ 68 S				75/ 62 0.21				74/ 55 PC			
Not available				94/ 72 0				94/ 75 T				72/ 53 0				68/ 56 Sh			
N.Y.C. region				90/ 65 0				86/ 76 0.21				86/ 76 0.21				79/ 58 0.03			
Yesterday				80/ 69 T				80/ 69 T				80/ 69 T				80/ 69 T			
Today				78/ 66 C				78/ 66 C				78/ 66 C				78/ 66 C			
Tomorrow				79/ 70 T				79/ 70 T				79/ 70 T				79/ 70 T			
New York City				83/ 70 0				83/ 70 0				83/ 70 0				83/ 70 0			
Bridgeport				80/ 65 T				80/ 65 T				80/ 65 T				80/ 65 T			
Caldwell				85/ 61 0				85/ 61 0				85/ 61 0				85/ 61 0			
Danbury				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0			
Essex				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0			
Newark				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0				85/ 60 0			
Trenton				85/ 61 0				85/ 61 0				85/ 61 0				85/ 61 0			
White Plains				84/ 64 0				84/ 64 0				84/ 64 0				84/ 64 0			
United States				87/ 64 0				87/ 64 0				87/ 64 0				87/ 64 0			
Albany				87/ 64 0				87/ 64 0				87/ 64 0				87/ 64 0			
Albuquerque				83/ 68 0				83/ 68 0				83/ 68 0				83/ 68 0			
Anchorage				57/ 46 0				57/ 46 0				57/ 46 0				57/ 46 0			
Atlanta				94/ 75 0.05				94/ 75 0.05				94/ 75 0.05				94/ 75 0.05			
Atlantic City				78/ 65 0				78/ 65 0				78/ 65 0				78/ 65 0			
Austin				97/ 76 0				97/ 76 0				97/ 76 0				97/ 76 0			
Baltimore				80/ 70 0.04				80/ 70 0.04				80/ 70 0.04				80/ 70 0.04			
Baton Rouge				100/ 79 0				100/ 79 0				100/ 79 0				100/ 79 0			
Birmingham				87/ 76 0.05				87/ 76 0.05				87/ 76 0.05				87/ 76 0.05			
Boise				95/ 67 0				95/ 67 0				95/ 67 0				95/ 67 0			
Boston				78/ 64 0				78/ 64 0				78/ 64 0				78/ 64 0			
Buffalo				82/ 66 0.06				82/ 66 0.06				82/ 66 0.06				82/ 66 0.06			
Burlington				86/ 68 0				86/ 68 0				86/ 68 0				86/ 68 0			
Casper				73/ 45 0.03				68/ 51 S				68/ 51 S				68/ 51 S			
Charlottesville				91/ 72 0.02				92/ 73 T				92/ 73 T				92/ 73 T			
Chattanooga				92/ 71 0.15				92/ 72 T				92/ 72 T				92/ 72 T			
Chicago				91/ 72 0.08				78/ 65 T				78/ 65 T				78/ 65 T			
Cincinnati				86/ 72 0.15				81/ 68 T				81/ 68 T				81/ 68 T			
Cleveland				85/ 72 0.04				77/ 69 T				77/ 69 T				77/ 69 T			
Colorado Springs				81/ 72 0.15				82/ 56 T				82/ 56 T				82/ 56 T			
Concord				86/ 71 0.15				79/ 67 T				79/ 67 T				79/ 67 T			
Concord, N.H.				82/ 61 0				83/ 60 C				83/ 60 C				83/ 60 C			
Dallas-Ft. Worth				99/ 81 0				87/ 76 PC				87/ 76 T				87/ 76 T			
Denver				68/ 54 0.14				87/ 59 T				87/ 59 T				87/ 59 T			
Des Moines				82/ 68 0.07				86/ 65 T				86/ 65 T				86/ 65 T			
Detroit				90/ 70 0.20				82/ 68 T				78/ 65 T				78/ 65 T			
El Paso				101/ 76 0				103/ 74 PC				98/ 74 PC				98/ 74 PC			
Fairfield				86/ 62 0				86/ 63 PC				91/ 66 PC				91/ 66 PC			
Hartford				86/ 62 0				85/ 66 C				78/ 68 T				78/ 68 T			
Honolulu				90/ 75 0.05				84/ 72 Sh				85/ 74 T				85/ 74 T			
Houston				100/ 79 0				99/ 79 T				97/ 74 C				97/ 74 C			
Indianapolis				90/ 71 0.15				85/ 69 T				79/ 66 T				79/ 66 T			
Jackson				38/ 76 0				100/ 75 PC				97/ 76 T				97/ 76 T			
Jacksonville				92/ 72 0				93/ 73 T				96/ 73 T				96/ 73 T			
Kansas City				95/ 71 0.10				82/ 66 T				85/ 64 S				85/ 64 S			
Key West				91/ 82 0.26				91/ 82 T				91/ 82 T				91/ 82 T			
Las Vegas				104/ 82 0				106/ 83 S				112/ 87 T				112/ 87 T			
Lexington				90/ 72 0.35				89/ 70 T				86/ 68 T				86/ 68 T			





**3 AVIATION**  
United Airlines began to clear up its operations after storms and other issues caused days of disruptions.

**5 YOUR MONEY ADVISER**  
Medical expenses for retirees are at a historical high, and cheaper prescription drugs won't fix everything.



**8 SPORTS**  
Monte Ward pitched a perfect game, hit well and stole bases. And he was an author, a golfer and a lawyer.

# Business

The New York Times

People who didn't complete their degrees, and many parents, are among those with educational debt likely to face challenging times ahead.



OSCAR NABON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## The Student Loan Borrowers Who Will Continue to Struggle

By **RON LIEBER** and **TARA SIEGEL BERNARD**

The Supreme Court has barred the Biden administration from carrying out its plan to extinguish up to \$20,000 in federal student loan debt, and millions of borrowers will continue to struggle under the weight of their loans.

These are students who are lured by aggressive for-profit institutions, whose lofty promises of higher earnings never come to fruition. They are borrowers seeking advanced degrees that are often necessary for low-paying but essential jobs in social work, the classroom or the courtroom.

These are the women who take a break from the work force to care for family and can't find their way back to the salaries they had before.

Here are brief sketches of people in other circumstances like these, who have struggled and whose challenges are likely to continue.

### No Degree, but All of the Debt

Gina McDavitt, 36, is one of the millions of borrowers with student debt but no degree, a group that is more likely to slip into default.

She tried to put herself through college in her early 20s while working as a bra fitter at Macy's and took the most practical path: She started at College of San Ma-

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4



SCHAUN CHAMPION FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Top, the Rev. Joanna Leiserson, who owes \$157,000 in PLUS loans. Above, from left, Dorien Rogers, a recent college graduate, took out additional loans while working and pursuing an online master's degree; Monica Schmidt owes \$64,000, over half of which is for graduate work she did while working full time.



KEVIN SERNA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Key Measure Of Inflation Falls, Giving Slack to Fed

By **JEANNA SMIALEK** and **BEN CASSELMAN**

Consumer spending slowed and the Federal Reserve's preferred inflation gauge continued to moderate in May, the latest signs that the cool-down that policymakers have been aiming for is materializing — albeit more haltingly than they might prefer.

U.S. consumers spent just 0.1 percent more in May than the month before, the Commerce Department said on Friday. That was down from 0.6 percent growth in April, which was itself weaker than previously reported. Adjusted for inflation, spending in May was flat.

Slower spending may sound like bad news: Consumption is, after all, the engine of economic growth in America. But Fed officials have been raising interest rates to try to restrain consumer and business demand, hoping that such a weakening will force companies to stop raising prices so quickly. That could allow inflation, which has been rapid for more than two years, to return to a normal pace.

For now, price increases are moderating but remain more stubborn than Fed officials might prefer. Overall inflation cooled to 3.8 percent in the year through May, Friday's report showed, the first time it has slipped below 4 percent since early 2021. But a "core" inflation measure that stripped out food and fuel costs — which move around a lot — remained stubbornly high. Officials closely watch that measure for a sense of how quickly prices will increase in the months and years ahead.

While core inflation moderated to 4.6 percent in May, a softer reading than the 4.7 percent economists had forecast, it has hovered right around that pace since December.

"It's progress," Omair Sharif, the founder of Inflation Insights, said of the report as a whole. "But things are still just way too high."

More modest overall inflation is taking some pressure off consumers: Cheaper tanks of gas and

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

## Wall Street Is Feeling Optimistic

By **JOE RENNISON** and **J. EDWARD MORENO**

Stubbornly high inflation, a debt ceiling brawl, a brief banking crisis and the prospect of even higher interest rates: The past six months brought much to unsettle even the most optimistic investor.

Yet at the halfway point of 2023, the tone among investors is more upbeat than it has been over the past 12 months, when the Federal Reserve ratcheted up interest rates to stymie demand in the economy and curb inflation.

Investors have welcomed data showing that the economy remains on more solid footing than was expected at the start of the year. Corporate profits have surpassed expectations. Inflation is easing, albeit more slowly than forecast, and policymakers have signaled that they expect interest rates will soon reach their peak. The more time that has passed without investors' worst fears being realized, the more optimistic they have become.

"We anticipated more damage," said Kristina Hooper, chief global market strategist at the fund manager Invesco. "We have been pleasantly surprised."

The S&P 500 stock index ended the first half of 2023 more than 15 percent higher, after some analysts at the start of the year expected the market to lurch lower. The rally has been so strong that early in June, the S&P 500 stood 20 percent above its October low — the technical threshold for the start of a bull market.

Even smaller companies, more

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

## French Newsroom Strikes to Protest New 'Far-Right' Editor

By **LIZ ALDERMAN**

PARIS — In its 75-year history, Le Journal du Dimanche, France's leading Sunday newspaper, has almost never missed publication. But its operations ground to a halt this week after an editor with a far-right track record was abruptly appointed just ahead of a takeover of the paper by the French billionaire Vincent Bolloré, prompting a mass walkout

by journalists and igniting a firestorm in French media and political circles.

Mr. Bolloré, an industrialist often described as France's Rupert Murdoch, has been steadily building a conservative media empire, anchored by a Fox-style news network, CNews. The appointment of the editor, Geoffroy Lejeune, who was formerly at a far-right magazine that was fined for racist in-

### Journalists point to transformations at other media outlets.

sults, raised concerns that one of France's most prominent newspapers could be transformed into a right-wing platform.

"For the first time in France

since the Liberation, a large national media will be run by a far-right personality," said an open letter published this week in Le Monde, France's biggest newspaper, signed by 400 academics, economists, cultural figures and left-leaning politicians backing the JDD, as the paper is known. "This is a dangerous precedent which concerns us all," the letter said.

Journalists at the JDD, known for its interviews with government leaders and largely centrist policy analysis, voted on Thursday to prolong their walkout to protest the hiring of Mr. Lejeune, 34, who was fired last year from the magazine Valeurs Actuelles amid a dispute with the owner over editorial direction. The paper did not publish Sunday, only the

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4



The Digest

TECHNOLOGY

Apple Ends Day Valued At \$3 Trillion, a First

Apple became the first publicly traded company to close a trading day with a \$3 trillion market value, marking another milestone for a technology juggernaut that has reshaped society with a lineup of products that churn out eye-popping profits.

Apple shares closed up 2.3 percent at \$193.97 on Friday, bringing its market value to \$3.04 trillion. Apple is one of a handful of tech-

nology companies, including Microsoft and the chip maker Nvidia, that helped drive the S&P 500 to a gain of nearly 16 percent in the first half of the year.

The company had briefly eclipsed a \$3 trillion market value on back-to-back days in January 2022, but it could not hold on until the market closed. Instead, Apple's stock sunk into a prolonged descent that pushed its value briefly below \$2 trillion this year amid a slowdown in growth and investor jitters about rising interest rates that affected the entire tech sector. *ASSOCIATED PRESS*

PHARMACEUTICAL

Bausch + Lomb to Buy Novartis Eye Products

Bausch + Lomb said on Friday that it would acquire several Novartis eye care products for \$1.75 billion as their market grows, sending the company's shares up more than 4 percent by the close of trading.

The deal includes acquisition of Novartis's anti-inflammation eye drop Xudra, the experimental drug libvatrep for chronic ocular surface pain, and rights to use the company's AcuStream dry-eye drug delivery device.

The deal is the first major transaction under Brent Saunders since his return to the company as chief executive in March. It includes potential milestone payments of up to \$750 million to Novartis.



BRENDAN McDERMID/REUTERS

It was expected to close by the end of this year and would boost the company's earnings, the company said.

Bausch + Lomb's Miebo was approved in May for dry-eye condition, which affects about 739 million people worldwide, including around 38 million in the United States. *REUTERS*

ENERGY

Renewable Energy Head Leaves Shell After Shift

Shell's head of renewable generation, Thomas Brostrom, is leaving the company, a spokesperson said on Friday, weeks after the company's chief executive, Wael Sawan, scaled back its energy transition plans.

Mr. Brostrom joined Shell from the offshore wind giant Orsted in August 2021 to head offshore wind as Shell planned to rapidly expand its wind and solar operations as

part of a strategy to cut greenhouse gas emissions under its previous chief executive, Ben van Beurden.

Mr. Brostrom quickly became head of renewables in February 2022 after Elisabeth Brinton stepped down less than two years after taking the reins.

Mr. Sawan, who took office in January, announced on June 14 that there would be a shift back to oil and gas production and a paring back of investments in renewables following investor pressure to focus on the most profitable businesses. *REUTERS*



Market Rally Caps Strong First Half of '23

By The Associated Press

Wall Street blazed to another rally Friday to close a winning week, month and first half of the year after reports suggested pressure on inflation may be easing.

The S&P 500 climbed 1.2 percent to reach its highest level

**STOCKS & BONDS**

since April 2022. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 285 points, or 0.8 percent, and the Nasdaq composite jumped 1.4 percent.

The market has cruised through 2023 in part because the economy has been able to defy many predictions for it to fall into a recession, at least so far. The job market in particular has remained resilient despite high interest rates that slow the economy in hopes of dragging down inflation. That's helped profits for companies not fall as much as feared.

"Just think back to the beginning of the year: There was more pessimism both on the economic and corporate fronts," said Lisa Erickson, head of the public markets group at U.S. Bank Wealth Management. "And we've just seen, on both fronts, outperformance."

Not only that, Wall Street hopes inflation is cooling enough for the Federal Reserve to soon halt its hikes to rates. That would mean less added pressure for the economy and financial markets.

A report on Friday showed a measure of inflation that the Fed prefers to use eased in May. It also said growth in spending by consumers slowed by more than expected. If fewer dollars are chasing after purchases, that could remove more pressure on inflation.

"There's lots of noise around the edges, but tepid consumption growth and a downward trend for inflation means the end is near for rate hikes," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management.

The Fed has already raised rates a mammoth 5 percentage points from virtually zero early last year. Traders on Wall Street pared back bets that the Fed may hike interest rates twice again this year, with the majority betting the federal funds rate will be only 0.25

The S&P 500 Index



Personal Income



proving, but their expectations for inflation aren't rising. That could also make for an easier Fed. The central bank has said it wants to avoid a vicious cycle where expectations for high inflation drive behavior that only worsens inflation.

Easier interest rates help prices for all kinds of investments. But technology and other high-growth stocks tend to be seen as some of the biggest winners, and they helped to lead the market.

Nvidia rose 3.7 percent, for example. It's been among a small cadre of stocks that have exploded higher this year amid a frenzy about artificial-intelligence software. It's up 189.5 percent for the year so far.

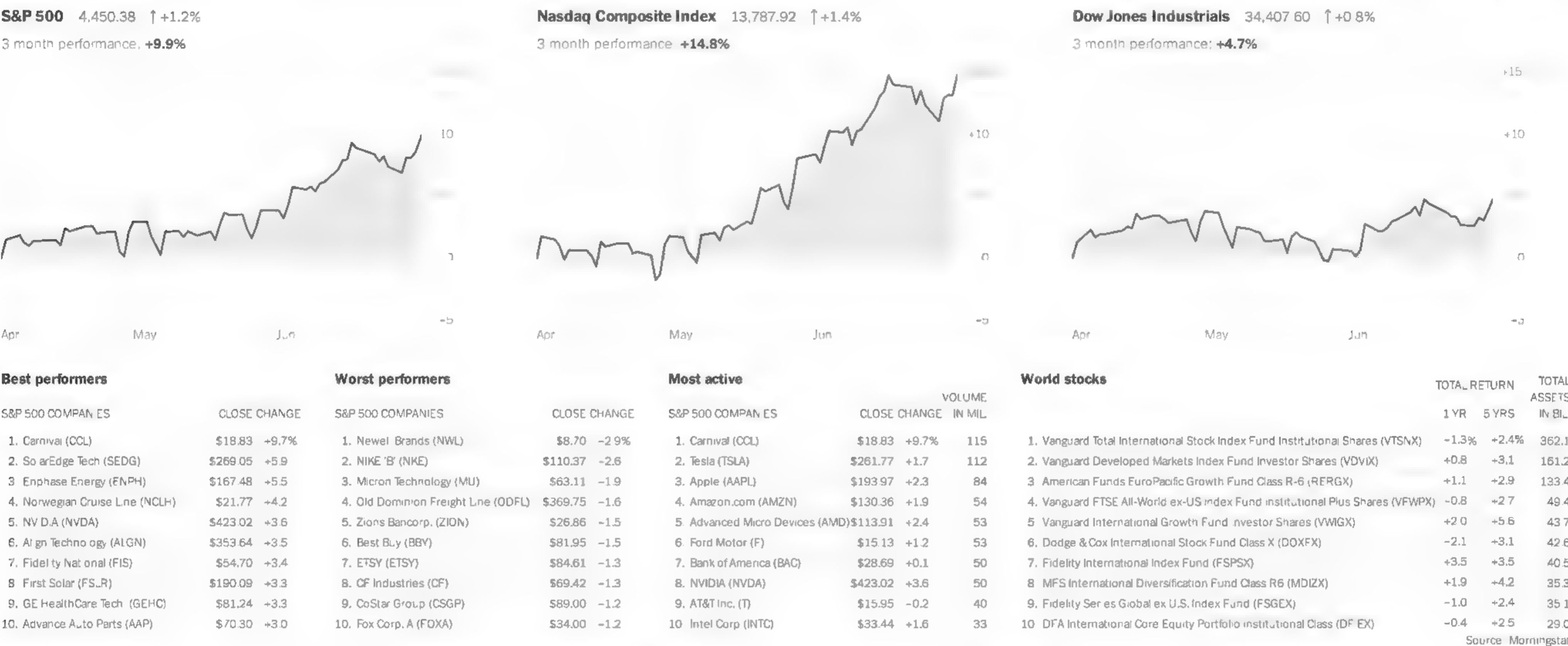
percentage points higher at the end of 2023, if it all, according to data from CME Group.

Yields in the bond market turned lower after the release of the economic data. The 10-year Treasury yield fell to 3.81 percent from nearly 3.87 percent just before the report's release. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

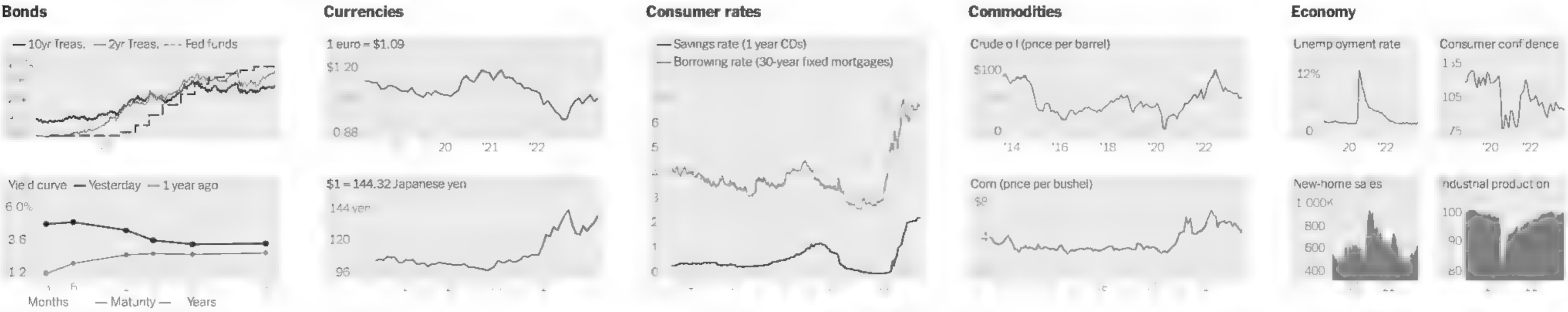
The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, slipped to 4.88 percent from 4.90 percent just before the report's release.

A separate report from the University of Michigan said sentiment among consumers is im-

What Happened in Stock Markets Yesterday



What Is Happening in Other Markets and the Economy





ECONOMY | AVIATION

# Inflation Slows In Eurozone, But Pressures On Price Persist

By PATRICIA COHEN

Inflation across most economies in Europe eased last month, but concerns about continuing price increases in sectors like services and food are likely to prompt the European Central Bank to raise interest rates yet again despite slowing growth and the risk of higher unemployment.

Consumer prices in the 20 countries that use the euro as their currency rose at an annual rate of 5.5 percent in June, down from 6.1 percent in May, the statistical office of the European Commission reported on Friday.

The increase in what is known as core inflation, which strips out the volatile categories of food and energy and is a more reliable measure of underlying price pressures, will be of particular concern to central bankers. That rate was 5.4 percent over the year through June, up from 5.3 percent in May.

### Why It Matters

Europe's economy, though more resilient than many forecasters had predicted, has still significantly weakened over the past 12 months, with a drop in inflation-adjusted wages and consumer confidence. Growth is expected to pick up, but further increases in interest rates could act as a brake on the economy.

Gita Gopinath, first deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said this week that an "uncomfortable truth" was that central banks must remain diligent about bringing down inflation rates "even if that means risking weaker growth."

The same message is coming from the E.C.B., which has already signaled the likelihood of rate increases in July and September. At the central bank's 10th annual conference this week in Sintra, Portugal, Christine Lagarde, the E.C.B.'s president, said: "Inflation in the euro area is too high and is set to remain so for too long."

The rapid rate increases have drawn criticism from political leaders like Giorgia Meloni, Italy's prime minister, who scorned "the E.C.B.'s simplistic recipe of raising interest rates" in a speech to Parliament on Wednesday.

Lucrezia Reichlin, a professor at the London Business School and a former director general of research at the E.C.B., said that "it would be a mistake" to raise rates in September.

"There is a misconception that core inflation is driven by demand," she said, but the tiny increase in June is a result of a time lag between the impact of previous rate increases and significant declines in energy prices.

Riccardo Marcelli Fabiani, an economist at Oxford Economics, said the slight increase in core inflation "does not mean that the deflationary process has stopped."

### Background

Inflation in the eurozone — whipped up by soaring energy and food prices last year after the coronavirus pandemic eased and Russia invaded Ukraine — peaked in October at 10.6 percent.

Price rises have been slowing across the eurozone since then. France's annual inflation rate fell to 5.3 percent in June, from 6 percent in May. Italy's rate fell to a 14-month low of 6.7 percent, down from 8 percent the previous month. Spain's rate fell to 1.6 percent, the slowest since March 2021. Government subsidies of gas bills have helped keep the rate low.

Despite expectations that inflation in Europe will continue to fall, the rate remains well above the central bank's target of 2 percent. Efforts to achieve that goal led policymakers to raise interest rates, lifting the deposit rate to 3.5 percent in June, a 22-year high.

### Why is inflation so persistent?

Ms. Lagarde said this week that "this persistence is caused by the fact that inflation is working its way through the economy in phases, as different economic agents try to pass the costs on to each other."

Although economists are often fixated by the risk of a wage-price spiral fueling inflation, recently there has been growing evidence that the pursuit of company profits has been pumping up prices despite significant drops in energy prices since last year's peak.

"Rising corporate profits account for almost half the increase in Europe's inflation over the past two years as companies increased prices by more than spiking costs of imported energy," economists at the International Monetary Fund said this week.

# Wall St. Is Optimistic. Corporate America Isn't So Sure.

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

exposed to the ups and downs of the economy, have begun to join the rally. The Russell 2000 index, which tracks the smallest 2,000 companies in the Russell 3000 index, rose 7 percent in June, after falling 0.7 percent through the first five months of the year.

As companies gear up to present their financial results for the three months through June, such optimism rests on a shaky foundation. Twelve months ago, investors feared that historically high inflation could linger and that the Fed's determination to lower it could go too far, tipping the economy into a recession and upending financial markets.

Although a robust economy has defused recession fears, inflation has remained high. If it doesn't slow down fast enough, the Fed might keep interest rates elevated for longer — tightening the screws on the economy.

"It wouldn't have been thinkable to have a 5 percent interest rate before the pandemic," Jerome H. Powell, the Fed's chair, said on Thursday. "And now the question is: Is that tight enough policy?"

Far from fretting that an impending slump in the economy will weigh on corporate profitability and drag down stock prices, investors are beginning to believe that company earnings are poised to grow again.

"Within the equity market, the single biggest surprise has been the resilience of earnings," said Stuart Kaiser, an equity analyst at

Citigroup.

Wall Street's forecasts still appear to contradict such a rosy reflection, with analysts expecting the worst round of earnings reports since the initial impact of the pandemic in 2020. That equates to a fall in earnings for the S&P 500 of nearly 7 percent from a year ago, according to data from FactSet — an acceleration from a drop of around 2 percent for the first three months of the year.

Much of the current quarter's expected contraction, however, is in the energy and materials sectors. Energy company earnings are expected to be roughly half what they were a year ago, while materials companies are braced for a 30 percent decline, weighing on the broader index.

For example, at Chevron, the pandemic recovery led to record profits as energy demand soared. The company's earnings per share are expected to be 46 percent below the second quarter of 2022, but that would still be far better than the company managed before the pandemic.

Elsewhere, seven of the 11 major sectors in the S&P 500 expected to report earnings growth from a year ago. Importantly, analysts forecast renewed earnings growth for the index as a whole starting in the coming quarter.

"Given the expectations for a return to earnings growth, it will be more important than usual to monitor the guidance provided by companies for the next few quarters," said John Butters, senior

earnings analyst at FactSet.

Bank executives will have had a full quarter to digest the impact from March's turmoil, which resulted in the takeover of three banks by regulators. Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen recently warned that further bank consolidation could be around the corner.

Investors will also have a chance to hear from some of the companies that have benefited from the enthusiasm over artificial intelligence, jolting the stock prices of a clutch of chip makers

## Seven of the 11 major sectors are expected to report growth.

and other tech companies sharply higher.

Nvidia, arguably the biggest beneficiary of the A.I. boom, has risen more than 180 percent this year, adding more than \$600 billion to its market valuation and making the chip maker one of a select few companies worth more than \$1 trillion.

Apple, the largest company in the S&P 500, reached a record high in the stock market this week, becoming the first company to be valued at more than \$3 trillion.

"The big risk is around tech and the A.I. theme," Mr. Kaiser of Citigroup said, cautioning that the soaring valuations of some com-

# Key Measure of Inflation Drops, Giving Slack to Federal Reserve

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

less rapid price increases in the grocery aisle are helping paychecks go further. But for officials at the Fed, signs that inflation remains stubborn under the surface have been a reason to worry. Officials believe that they need to wrestle core price increases lower to make sure that the economy's future is one of modest and steady price increases.

Fed policymakers have been raising interest rates since March 2022 in a bid to cool the economy and bring inflation back under control, and they have projected that they will raise them slightly more in 2023. Making it more expensive to get a home loan or expand a business can drag on economic momentum.

But a range of recent data points have suggested that the Fed's moves are so far failing to fully sap the economy of its steam. The housing market weakened sharply last year, but it has shown signs it is beginning to recover. Growth was faster than previously believed early this year, data this week showed. People are still buying cars, taking vacations and eating out, based on a range of real-time data trackers.

In fact, Kathy Bostjancic, chief economist at Nationwide, cautioned against reading too much into the slowdown in consumer spending in the fresh May data. She thought that some of the pull-



Dining in Chicago. After months of drawing down savings amid rising prices, Americans have begun saving more.

back was probably owed to a limited supply of cars, which prevented more auto sales.

Still, she said the report was marginally good news for policymakers. The fact that April spending was weaker than the strong uptick previously reported was probably a welcome development. "It is better than the alterna-

tive," Ms. Bostjancic said.

And the report contained subtle but important hints that consumers are becoming more cautious. After months of drawing down savings amid rising prices, Americans have begun saving more, which historically has been a sign of economic worries.

"Consumers are saving more

and spending less, perhaps out of caution as most believe a recession is either here or imminent," Robert Frick, corporate economist with Navy Federal Credit Union, wrote in a note to clients.

That could help make the Fed more comfortable that rates are high enough — or nearly high enough — to restrain the economy

panies are predicated more on hopes than current realities. "They will be under the microscope," he said.

Most important for gauging the broader health of the economy will be consumer companies like PepsiCo and McDonald's, which have minimized their rising costs tied to interest rates and inflation by successfully charging consumers more.

With signs that households across the country are beginning to tighten their purse strings, as savings built up during the pandemic dwindle, it's uncertain how long they can continue absorbing higher prices.

Despite the bullishness of investors, companies appear to be more vigilant of the potential for the economy to start sagging. A survey of optimism among small businesses ticked higher in May but remains close to its lowest level of the past decade. A similar survey of manufacturing businesses from the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia has also edged higher recently but remains sharply lower than two years ago.

Business chiefs have opted for more conservative management strategies, backing away from tactics to lift their stock prices, like repurchasing their own stock or paying large dividends.

Nonetheless, among the small number of companies that have already reported earnings, the trend has been against them. Jeffrey Harmening, the chairman and

chief executive of General Mills, said on the company's earnings call on Thursday that it was starting to see a slowdown in sales, "as consumers are feeling the pinch from inflation."

FedEx, a bellwether for the economy, reported lower volumes across its business. "We're all watching the consumer," noted Brie A. Carere, the company's chief customer officer.

Policymakers who are trying to engineer a gentle slowdown in the economy will welcome some weakness. But should their efforts falter, earnings could fall faster, leading to layoffs, higher unemployment and the beginnings of a more severe downturn.

"We know that normally the labor market is the last shoe to drop," Roger Ahlaga-Diaz, Vanguard's chief economist for the Americas, said. "Once you see the labor market weakening, you're already there."

One of Wall Street's most widely talked about recession indicators compares the difference between yields on short-dated government bonds with yields on longer-dated government bonds. Typically, investors require more interest to lend to the government for longer. When that relationship — known as the "yield curve" — inverts, as it did last year, typically a recession follows.

Kathy Jones, chief fixed income strategist at the Schwab Center for Financial Research, said she hoped that didn't happen, "but it seems like a lot to ask."

and bring inflation back to target.

Policymakers have raised interest rates to 5 percent, but they skipped a rate increase at their June meeting, after 10 straight moves, to give themselves time to assess how much more would be needed. Officials forecast that they could lift rates to 5.5 percent by the end of the year.

Investors had been betting on only one more quarter-point move this year, but they have in recent days nudged up the chances of two moves before the end of 2023. Those odds fell slightly after Friday's report. Markets welcomed the fresh data, helping to push the S&P 500 stock index more than 1 percent higher on Friday.

Ms. Bostjancic said she believed that the Fed would most likely raise interest rates in July still but that Friday's consumer spending data could — at least at the margin — "ease the pressure" for further changes beyond that.

Jerome H. Powell, the Fed chair, emphasized this week at an event in Madrid that the outlook for how much more rates might move this year was uncertain.

Inflation has consistently been "more persistent and stronger than expected," Mr. Powell said. "At some point, that may change. And I think we have to be ready to follow the data and be a little patient as we let this unfold."

Joe Rennison contributed reporting.

# United Airlines Begins to Right Itself After a Rash of Delays and Cancellations

By NIRAJ CHOKSHI and CHRISTINE CHUNG

United Airlines appeared to restore more normal operations on Friday after a weeklong struggle to recover from flight delays and cancellations ahead of the busy Fourth of July holiday.

The airline's disruptions began last weekend in the New York area. At the time, United blamed thunderstorms and federal air traffic control staffing shortages and inexperience. Other airlines suffered flight delays and cancellations at the time, too, but by Wednesday United's problems stood out as they spread to its operations across the country.

Adding to the bad publicity for the airline, the company's chief executive, Scott Kirby, on Wednesday took a private jet to Denver, where the airline has a hub, from Teterboro Airport, which is close to Newark Liberty International Airport, another United hub. The airline said it did not pay for the trip and, in a statement on Friday, Mr. Kirby said he regretted taking that flight.

"Taking a private jet was the wrong decision because it was insensitive to our customers who were waiting to get home," he said. "I sincerely apologize to our customers and our team members who have been working around the clock for several days — often through severe weather — to take care of our customers."

United's troubles began to improve in recent days. After canceling over a quarter of its flights on Tuesday and Wednesday, United scrubbed about 19 percent of its schedule on Thursday and about 8 percent by late afternoon on Friday, according to FlightAware, a



United canceled over a quarter of its flights on Tuesday and Wednesday.

flight tracking firm. Still, the number of flights the airline canceled on those two days eclipsed cancellations by other carriers.

United expressed optimism about its recovery on Friday. In a statement, the airline said that storms could present a challenge along the East Coast and in Denver and Chicago, but that United was "ready" for the busy weekend.

"Our reliability continues to improve, with far fewer cancellations today compared to previous days," United said.

On Monday, Mr. Kirby told employees in a memo that the Federal Aviation Administration, which oversees air traffic control and is a part of the Transportation Department, had "failed" United over the weekend.

This week has been one of the busiest periods for air travel in years. The Transportation Security Administration reported

screening more than 2.7 million people on Thursday, one of its busiest days since 2019. Only four other days have been busier since the pandemic began, all in recent weeks. AAA, the travel club, said it expected nearly 4.2 million people to fly this weekend, up 6.6 percent from 2019.

Throughout the week, United passengers have reported having to sleep in airports and stand in line for hours to rebook flights. Some travelers said they had to wait days to retrieve checked bags.

Elizabeth Rodriguez, traveling with her 12-year-old son, said in an interview on Friday that it had taken days longer than expected to get home to Fairfax, Va., from Texas. On Wednesday morning, just hours before they were scheduled to depart on a United flight from San Antonio International Airport, she was notified by text and through the airline's mobile

app that the flight had been canceled because of crew scheduling issues.

When Ms. Rodriguez called customer service to rebook, she was told there was a two-hour wait. With no other available flights to the Washington area that day, she booked a flight online departing the next day via Houston. After she landed in Houston on Thursday night, her flight to Reagan National Airport was delayed repeatedly into Friday morning.

"United Airlines handled this week poorly, was ill prepared and failed to be transparent with passengers throughout the entire process," Ms. Rodriguez said. She added that testy gate agents had offered many reasons for the ordeal, including crew scheduling issues, weather and mechanical problems.

The airline handed out hotel vouchers for only some passengers on her flight, said Ms. Rodriguez, who ended up paying for a room herself. Her flight finally departed on Friday morning, 15 hours after its original departure time.

"I am so frustrated with delays, but even more so with how they treated people at the airport," she said. "I don't know if I will use United again."

Her exasperation was similar to what passengers of Southwest Airlines felt over the winter holidays. Southwest canceled more than 10,000 flights in the four days after Christmas, or about 46 percent of its schedule. On United's worst day this week, Tuesday, it canceled nearly 800 flights, or about 28 percent of its schedule.

The disruptions have left pilots

and flight attendants frustrated, too. Many have had to wait on hold for hours for reassignments after flights were canceled. Some flight attendants slept at airports, too, according to social media posts.

"Weather last weekend affected everyone, but United is the only airline still struggling to recover, and we know why," Ken Diaz, president of the United chapter of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, which represents more than 25,000 United flight attendants, said in a statement on Thursday. "United management's failure to properly staff crew schedulers, the flight attendant support team and more has exacerbated these operational issues."

Mr. Diaz said United had "lost" crews in its system for days because of the breakdown. He also said that the union had warned management last year of problems that could contribute to more disruptions, but that the airline "charged ahead" with an ambitious flight schedule this summer. United used some of the union's recommendations to get through the current disruption, including making changes to its schedule and agreeing to pay flight attendants three times their normal pay to pick up trips through next Thursday, Mr. Diaz said.

Pilots have expressed similar frustrations.

"It is United Airlines management that is failing our loyal customers by ignoring the warning signs and failing to properly plan," Capt. Garth Thompson, president of the United chapter of the Air Line Pilots Association union, which represents more than 15,000 of the airline's pilots, said in a statement.



EDUCATION | MEDIA

# The Student Loan Borrowers Who Will Continue to Struggle

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE  
teo, a community college, and had planned to transfer to San Francisco State University.

But the classes required to complete her associate degree weren't always offered, which meant she had to wait until they were. In the meantime, the costs of attending rose — but her Pell grant and loan eligibility did not, and she soon had trouble making ends meet.

"I was effectively priced out," said Ms. McDavitt, who left school with about \$3,000 in loans, which ballooned after several deferments. "So I have, like, \$8,500 worth of student loans that are for a degree that would be free now," she added, referring to programs that make community college free for eligible students.

"That, paired with I live alone, I have been in the same role for a while and I am in the Bay Area, and it is very expensive out here," she said. "I struggle."

Ms. McDavitt, who lives in Vallejo, Calif., and works in customer relationship management for a transport company, said she had been passed over for several promotions because she lacked the requisite degree. She recently trained someone who was promoted ahead of her.

"As it stands now, the amount of money I make doesn't cover my bills," said Ms. McDavitt, whose loans fell into default just before the pandemic took hold. "I am a single person making less than \$55,000 a year with no degree. The weight of the world is on my shoulders."

Ms. McDavitt is eager to start school again but unable to afford it.

When Monica Schmidt, 44, gave birth to her son in 2008, she was finishing a big term paper in her hospital room. Five months later, she received her B.S. in nursing from the University of Phoenix.

She next pursued a master's degree, which would elevate her to nurse practitioner and provide her with the option of teaching. Her husband, a sales manager at a food company, worked during the day while she cared for their children, who were 1 and 4. At night, she worked full time as a supervisor at a skilled nursing facility while taking classes at Northern Illinois University.

"We couldn't afford day care, so we worked opposite shifts," said Ms. Schmidt, who lives in Genoa, Ill., and now works as a nurse in a therapeutic day school.

But after three years of starts and restarts, the juggle became more of a struggle with their young children, and in 2013 she stopped her coursework. The debt, however, was hers to keep. She now owes \$64,000, more than half of which is for her graduate work.

Once her payments restart, she'll pay roughly \$450 a month for the next 25 years, or until her



Georgetown University in Washington. Not everyone with debt would have been covered under President Biden's student loan forgiveness plan, which the Supreme Court struck down on Friday.

retirement. She has made 52 of the 120 qualifying payments for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, but she would be required to pay roughly \$900 a month, an amount her family cannot afford, especially while saving for retirement and her two children's college educations.

"I don't want them to be in the same situation as me," Ms. Schmidt said.

### A Different Kind of Black Tax

Recent college graduates with student loan debt like Dorien Rogers, 23, face a constant buzz of questions in their heads: Make extra debt payments or start a savings plan? Can I afford to buy a home in the community I grew up in? (In his case, in Montgomery County, Md.) What about money to start a family someday?

As a Black man, Mr. Rogers is aware that Black people are more likely to have to borrow and that Black women often struggle the most with student loan debt.

Asha Anthony, 20, a rising senior at Howard University, will

leave college with a B.A. in legal communication and about \$30,000 in loans. But she's already contemplating how she'll finance her dream of becoming a civil rights lawyer, which typically requires an additional six figures in student debt.

She has already received help from her mother — who raised three daughters, with the help of her parents, while single and will have accumulated at least \$30,000 in parental loans by the time Ms. Anthony graduates. Yet her mother is still paying down student debt of her own.

"I am determined to attend law school because it is a high priority for me, as it is for many young Black people, to be able to attend graduate schools and meet the goals I have set for myself," said Ms. Anthony, who grew up in Mesa, Ariz. "It is discouraging when thinking about potential costs, because my family can only provide so much on top of what I am able."

Mr. Rogers also has high aspirations. He took out additional loans

last year and began an online master's degree in public administration.

At the same time, he was working as a substitute teacher and a DoorDash driver and serving as the president of Maryland's youth and college division for the N.A.A.C.P.

He wants to go into politics and sees education as a kind of national mandate, especially for people like him.

"Education is a tool to better our communities, and the institutions of higher learning have been pivotal to advance our nation," he said.

With a political science bachelor's degree from Salisbury University in Maryland, he can't help wondering: If legislators chose to assist the country's banks during the 2008 financial crisis, why don't they believe people like him are worthy of similar investments?

"If you're able to forgive debt, you're going to see reinvestment in the economy," he said. "Homeownership. Building up credit. Starting more families."

### The Parent Trap

Federal PLUS loans for parents are a product tailor made for trouble, and there's no sign of that changing anytime soon.

That's because parents can borrow up to the cost of their child's entire education, and it doesn't matter how much they earn. Moreover, lots of schools with high costs but low resources send financial aid notices to students telling them to make up their own shortfalls with tens of thousands of dollars of these loans.

Now, imagine that you have three children, are separated from your spouse and are earning just \$11.50 an hour after spending years raising them. That was the predicament that the Rev. Joanna Leiserson found herself in when she was living in Spokane, Wash., in 2000 and her oldest child was about to start college.

PLUS loans were the only way to afford the schools that best fit her children's needs. After years of being unable to afford the payments — she became an Episcopal priest in 2005 — and having the

debt in forbearance, she's finally in an income-driven repayment program and has consolidated her \$157,000 in debt to allow her to enroll in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. Her debt will be eliminated if she works another nine years. Otherwise, it could be with her until she dies.

"It does weigh on me," she said. "I'm not sure that it's true, but it feels like society will pay for it if I don't."

But any taxpayer subsidy is established public policy, based on laws that both Democrats and Republicans signed off on over the years. And then there is the matter of any higher power that might have an opinion on the matter.

"I believe that God doesn't weigh in on the specifics of our debts, but rather wants us as a community to consider the policies and the underlying principles and values of our nation and ask ourselves whether they align with God's values," Ms. Leiserson said. "Which is a community in which all persons can live sustainable lives of dignity and respect."

# French Newsroom Strikes to Protest Appointment of a 'Far-Right' Editor

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE  
second time since its founding in 1948, and on Thursday evening the website was still leading with news from last week.

Over 1,000 people gathered at a theater in Paris this week at a rally organized by Reporters Without Borders, which condemned what it said was an effort by Mr. Bolloré to assert shareholder control over a newsroom.

France's culture minister, Rima Abdul Malak, weighed in on Twitter. "Legally, the JDD can become what it wants, as long as it re-

### 'The media space in France is not neutral.'

Dominique Reyné, a professor at Sciences Po and the founder of a right-leaning think tank.

spects the law," she wrote. "But as far as our Republic's values are concerned, how can one not be alarmed?"

The episode has turned a fresh spotlight on Mr. Bolloré, a politically connected industrialist who hails from traditionalist Catholic circles in Brittany. His business empire includes the global advertising agency Havas, and he has a controlling stake in the media conglomerate Vivendi. He forged his fortune in logistics and was known as the King of Africa for the vast business dealings that earned him riches in former French colonies.

After a corruption inquiry into accusations that he helped the presidents of two African nations gain power in exchange for lucrative business contracts, Mr. Bolloré shifted focus in recent years to his news media properties,

which in France tend to be a main avenue for the very rich to influence political elections. Over four-fifths of privately owned newspapers and TV and radio stations in France are owned by French or foreign billionaires or financiers. French state-backed television and radio stations hold dominant positions in the media landscape.

Pending approval of European Commission antitrust authorities, Mr. Bolloré is set this summer to secure his majority stake in Lagardère, a conglomerate that owns the JDD and Paris Match magazine. It would make him head of one of the largest broadcast and print empires in France.

Arnaud Lagardère, the conglomerate's chief executive, who essentially now reports to Mr. Bolloré, sought this week to assuage concerns over the hiring of Mr. Lejeune, who has not issued any public statements other than a brief Twitter message saying he was honored to take the helm. Mr. Lagardère said the hiring decision, which he insisted was his alone, was purely a business choice and not intended to change the editorial line.

"This fantasy that the extreme right is working its way into the paper is not real," he told the newspaper Le Figaro. But he added: "The JDD must also know how to adapt to changes in the world."

Mr. Lejeune wrote on Twitter last week that his appointment was a "huge honor" and that he would put "all my energy into the success of this challenge." He did not respond to a request for comment.

Under Mr. Bolloré, who typically avoids interviews and did not respond to a request for comment, several mainstream news outlets



Geoffroy Lejeune, the newly appointed editor of France's Le Journal du Dimanche, previously led a magazine that was fined for racist insults.



Vincent Bolloré, a politically connected industrialist and a billionaire, has been steadily building a conservative media empire in France.

have been transformed into right-leaning platforms that analysts say align with his political convictions and a personal concern that Christian culture is eroding in

France. He recently bought a flailing Christian newspaper with fewer than 10,000 subscribers, La France Catholique, with the aim of growing it.

The biggest shift has taken place at CNews, once a 24-hour news network, where many journalists were ousted or resigned in protest when Mr. Bolloré became owner in 2015. Their replacements shifted the focus to opinion segments and debates over hot-button issues, like crime, immigration and Islam's role in France.

The makeover propelled CNews to the top-rated TV spot in France, a country that has seen a steady rise in influence among right and far-right politicians, especially in last year's presidential election.

CNews gave a bullhorn to figures like Eric Zemmour, a best-selling author known for far-right nationalism, including the conspiracy theory of a "great replacement" of white people in France by immigrants from Africa. Inspired by Donald J. Trump, Mr. Zemmour became a TV star on CNews and ran against President Emmanuel Macron and Marine LePen in last year's presidential election, in an ultimately unsuccessful bid.

Similar rightward swings at Mr. Bolloré's other media holdings, including a Canal Plus news channel and Europe 1, a top-rated radio station, led to departures of reporters and editors.

So when journalists at the JDD learned of Mr. Lejeune's appointment — not through an official announcement but via a news report — a revolt broke out in the newsroom.

"Journalists are very worried about media independence," said Julia Cagé, an economist specializing in the media at Sciences Po, a research university in Paris.

"If you look at what happened for the past 10 years, Bolloré has destroyed the media he bought,

and used them to push a radical right-wing line, anti-rights for minorities and a Catholic perspective," she said. "In that sense, he's become worse than Rupert Murdoch."

But in a country where right-wing candidates received over 30 percent of the vote in last year's presidential election, Mr. Bolloré's platforms have filled what his supporters say was a political void in a French media landscape dominated by politically correct, left-leaning journalists.

"The media space in France is not neutral," said Dominique Reynié, a professor at Sciences Po and the founder of Fondapol, a right-leaning think tank. "If you bring up issues like immigration or Islamism, which really are problems in France, you are badly received by journalists who consider you to be right or extreme right."

Mr. Lejeune's appointment was a reflection of how France's media landscape is shifting in the direction of "what is happening in France electorally, which is an increasing shift to the right," Mr. Reynié added. "There is a readership market on that side, which is not reading the left-leaning press."

That is a bet that Mr. Bolloré seems eager to take.

"We have other media that is owned by industrialists who don't interfere with the editorial line, which is not the case with Bolloré," said Christian Delporte, a media historian at the University of Versailles.

"If he buys media, it's because he has in mind the desire to influence the political future of the country," he said. "He is accompanying the rise of the far right to power."



# Despite Help, Retiree Medical Costs Are High

Prescription drugs may get cheaper, but overall 20-year spending estimates have doubled since 2002.

## Your Money Adviser

By ANN CARRNS

Retirees just got some encouraging news: Coming changes to Medicare rules for prescription drugs may help rein in their health costs.

In part because of recently enacted limits on retiree prescription drug costs, the estimated cost of health and medical care in retirement overall didn't rise this year, according to an annual analysis from Fidelity Investments.

A 65-year-old retiring this year can expect to spend an average of \$157,500 on health and medical costs over a roughly 20-year retirement, said Hope Manion, senior vice president and chief actuary at Fidelity Workplace Consulting. The estimate is the same as it was in 2022 — the first time in almost a decade that the company's year-to-year projection has stayed flat.

While the latest estimate is a “welcome reprieve” from years of increasing health costs, Ms. Manion said, “it's still a big honking number.” This year's estimate is almost double the company's estimate of \$80,000 in 2002.

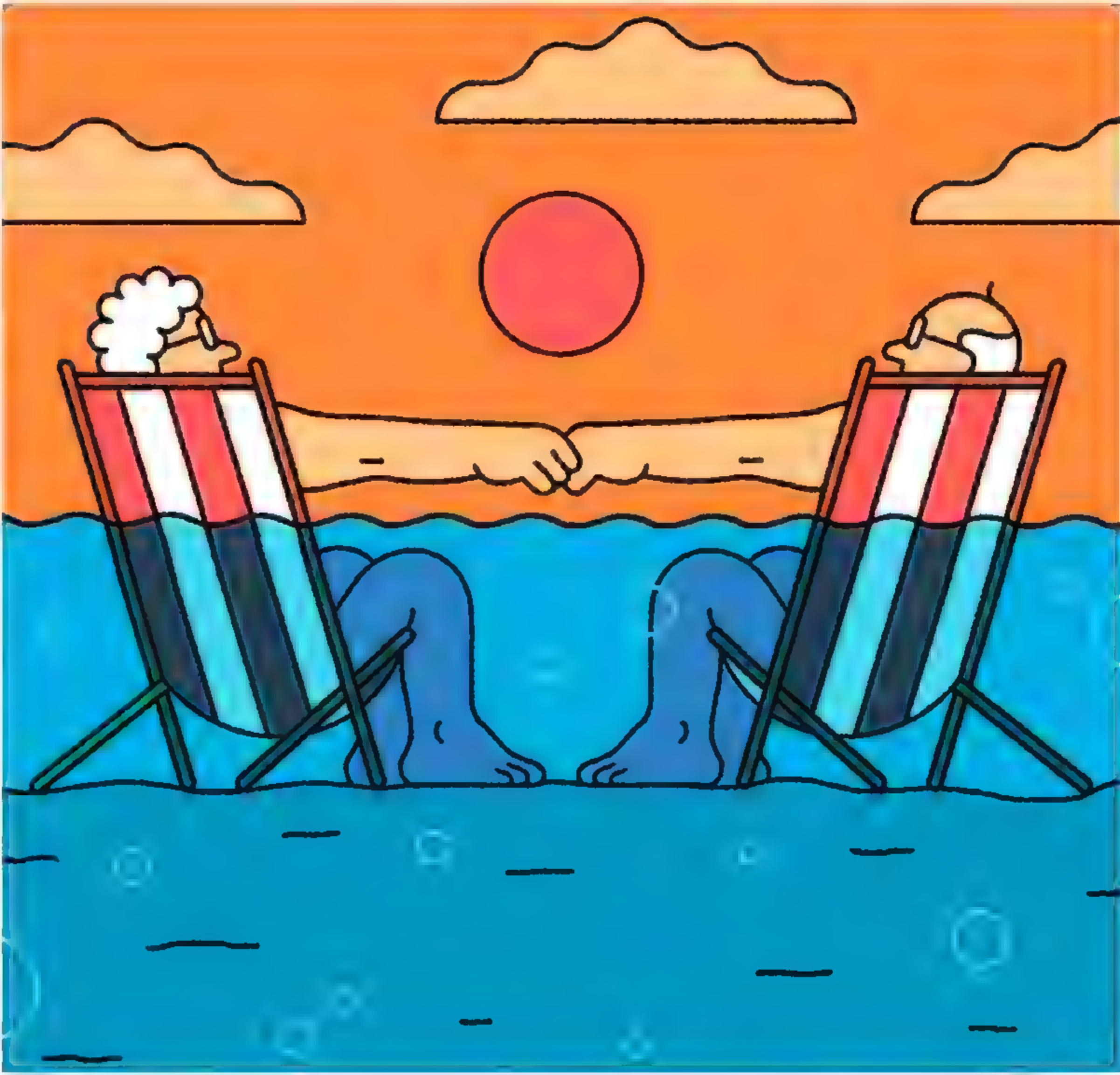
The estimated cost is \$165,000 for women, who tend to live longer, and \$150,000 for men.

Saving for health expenses in retirement is a bigger worry than it once was, not only because of rising medical costs but also because fewer employers offer health benefits to their retired workers. The Employee Benefit Research Institute, a nonprofit, reported in a separate analysis that about a quarter of large employers offered retiree health benefits in 2021, down from half about 25 years ago. Fewer government employers are offering retiree health insurance as well.

“That's a huge chunk of the worker population that now has to worry about something their parents didn't,” Jake Spiegel, research associate for health and wealth benefits at the institute, said in an email.

Fidelity bases its estimate on someone who is enrolled in traditional Medicare, the federal health program for people 65 and older and the disabled. Medicare covers hospital stays, doctor visits and lab tests, as well as prescription drugs. The estimate includes Medicare premiums, deductibles and co-payments but not the cost of care that Medicare doesn't cover, such as dental, vision and long-term care like assisted living or extended stays in a nursing home.

Some people assume that once they have Medicare coverage, they won't have to pay anything out of pocket, but that's not the case. So people should factor those costs into their retirement savings plan, Ms. Manion said.



FILL LAUER

For instance, while most people pay no monthly premium for Medicare Part A, which covers treatment in a hospital, the premium for Medicare Part B, which covers doctor visits and lab tests, is now \$165 a month (or more, depending on your income), and there's usually a 20 percent cost share when you receive treatment. Premiums vary for Part D, which covers prescription drugs. Starting in 2025, as part of changes made to Part D in the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs will be capped at \$2,000 a year.

The Employee Benefit Research Institute, using a probability approach, found that retirees with original Medicare may need to accumulate even more savings than Fidelity estimates to have a strong chance of covering their health costs because of the financial condition of the Medicare program and

cuts to employer-based retiree health programs.

Earlier this year, the institute estimated that to have a 90 percent chance of having enough money to cover Medicare premiums and prescription drug costs in retirement, a 65-year-old man would need to have saved \$166,000 and a woman \$197,000. (The institute's estimate assumes the retirees have a Medicare supplement plan, also called a Medigap plan, with average premiums to help cover costs that Medicare doesn't.)

In some cases, the institute says, the savings needed may be much greater. A couple with particularly high drug costs, for instance, could need to save \$383,000 to meet the 90 percent threshold.

“It's a pretty sobering number,” Mr. Spiegel said.

Spending estimates may be lower for

retirees in increasingly popular Medicare Advantage plans, federally funded but privately managed health plans that cover medical care as well as prescription drugs. Such plans have trade-offs, however, like limited doctor networks.

A man enrolled in Medicare Advantage who has median drug spending and average use of health care services would need \$96,000 to have a 90 percent chance of meeting health spending needs in retirement, while a woman would need \$113,000, according to the institute.

Cheryl Costa, a certified financial planner in Framingham, Mass., said that the projections might seem scary but that it could help to think about the estimates in annual or monthly costs, rather than a lump sum. Over 20 years, Fidelity's average estimate works out to about \$656 a month — not out of line

## Q. and A. About Health Costs

**Are health savings accounts useful for retirement health costs?**

Health savings accounts, or H.S.A.s, offer valuable tax advantages and can be a great way to save for retiree medical costs, financial advisers say — if you qualify to contribute to one. You must be enrolled in a high-deductible health care plan, with a specific annual deductible (at least \$1,500 for individual coverage in 2023).

Money is deposited pretax, grows tax free and isn't taxed when you withdraw it, as long as you spend it on eligible expenses. An individual can contribute up to \$3,850 in 2023, plus an extra \$1,000 for those over 55. (Once you enroll in Medicare, you can no longer contribute to an H.S.A., but you can use the funds to pay for health and medical expenses.)

**Where can I get an estimate of my Medicare costs in retirement?**

A financial planner can help with this. If you don't work with one, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which oversees Medicare, offers an online tool to help you estimate costs, as does the National Council on Aging. AARP, the advocacy group for older people, offers information on its website about affording retirement health costs.

**How much can long-term care cost?**

According to the Genworth Cost of Care Survey for 2021, the national median cost for assisted living is \$4,500 a month, while the cost of a semiprivate nursing home room is \$7,908 a month — again, costs that Medicare doesn't cover.

with what you may already be paying for health care, she said.

“Keep it in perspective,” she said.

Carolyn McClanahan, a certified financial planner in Jacksonville, Fla., said that there were many variables in health care costs, and that future changes to Medicare rules were unpredictable. So rather than focusing on generic estimates to save for retirement health costs, she said, people should consider their specific situation, including what they currently pay for health care, their general health status, their family history and how much health care they use.

“What is your health care mind-set?” Ms. McClanahan said. If you don't go to the doctor that often and you're exercising and maintaining a healthy weight, your out-of-pocket costs in retirement may be lower and you can budget accordingly, she said.

## Cambodian Ruler's Facebook Goes Dark After Meta Spat

By MIKE IVES and SUN NARIN

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA — The usually very active Facebook account for Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia appeared to have been deleted on Friday, a day after the oversight board for Meta, Facebook's parent company, recommended that he be suspended from the platform for threatening political opponents with violence.

The showdown pits the social media behemoth against one of Asia's longest-ruling autocrats.

Mr. Hun Sen, 70, has ruled Cambodia since 1985 and maintained power partly by silencing his critics. He is a staunch ally of China, a country whose support comes free of American-style admonishments on the value of human rights and democratic institutions.

A note Friday on Mr. Hun Sen's account, which had about 14 million followers, said that its content “isn't available right now.” It was not immediately clear if Mr. Hun Sen had preemptively deleted it, as he had vowed to do in a post late Thursday on Telegram, a social media platform where he has a much smaller following. A Meta spokesman said on Friday that the company had not suspended or otherwise removed Mr. Hun Sen's Facebook account.

“That he stopped using Facebook is his private right,” Phay Siphon, a spokesman for the Cambodian government, told The New York Times on Friday. “Other Cambodians use it, and that's their right.”

The company-appointed oversight board for Meta had on Thursday recommended a minimum six-month suspension of Mr. Hun Sen's accounts on Facebook and Instagram, which Meta also owns. The board also said that one of Mr. Hun Sen's Facebook videos had violated Meta's rules on “violence and incitement” and should be taken down.

In the video, Mr. Hun Sen delivered a speech in which he responded to allegations of vote-

stealing by calling on his political opponents to choose between the legal system and “a bat.”

“If you say that's freedom of expression, I will also express my freedom by sending people to your place and home,” Mr. Hun Sen said in the speech, according to Meta.

Meta had previously decided to keep the video online under a policy that allows the platform to allow content that violates Facebook's community standards on the grounds that it is newsworthy and in the public interest. But the oversight board said on Thursday that it was overturning the decision, calling it “incorrect.”

The board added that its recommendation to suspend Mr. Hun Sen's accounts for at least six months was justified given the severity of the violation and his “history of committing human rights violations and intimidating political opponents, and his strategic use of social media to amplify such threats.”

Meta later said in a statement that it would remove the offending video to comply with the board's decision. The company also said that it would respond to the suspension recommendation after analyzing it.

Critics of Facebook have long said that the platform can undermine democracy, promote violence and help politicians unfairly target their critics, particularly in countries with weak institutions.

Mr. Hun Sen has spent years cracking down on the news media and political opposition in an effort to consolidate his grip on power. In February, he ordered the shutdown of one of the country's last independent news outlets, saying he did not like its coverage of his son and presumed successor, Lt. Gen. Hun Manet.

Under Mr. Hun Sen, the government has also pushed for more government surveillance of the internet, a move that rights groups say makes it even easier for the authorities to monitor and punish online content.

## Fox News Agrees to Pay Ex-Producer \$12 Million

By KATIE ROBERTSON

Fox News has agreed to pay \$12 million to Abby Grossberg, a former Fox News producer who had accused the network of operating a hostile and discriminatory workplace and of coercing her into providing false testimony in a deposition.

Parisis G. Filippatos, a lawyer for Ms. Grossberg, said the settlement concluded all of Ms. Grossberg's claims against Fox and the people she had named in her complaints, which included the former host Tucker Carlson and some of his producers.

Ms. Grossberg's legal team filed a request in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York on Friday to dismiss a remaining lawsuit against Fox in light of the settlement.

Ms. Grossberg said in a statement on Friday that she stood by her allegations, but she was “heartened that Fox News has taken me and my legal claims seriously.”

“I am hopeful, based on our discussions with Fox News today, that this resolution represents a positive step by the network regarding its treatment of women and minorities in the workplace,” she said.

Fox News had previously disputed Ms. Grossberg's claims. A spokeswoman for the network said in a statement on Friday: “We are pleased that we have been able to resolve this matter without further litigation.”

Justin Wells, a former senior executive producer for Mr. Carlson, who was named in a complaint, said in a post on Twitter: “We deny Ms. Grossberg's claims and allegations against Tucker Carlson and his team. Nevertheless, we are glad that Fox has settled this matter and that all sides can move forward.”

The settlement with Ms. Grossberg is the latest development in a series of legal battles involving Fox. In April, the company agreed to pay Dominion Voting Systems \$787.5 million, in what is believed to be the biggest settlement figure in a defamation case. Days later,



DESIREE RIOS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Abby Grossberg claimed her experience at Fox was tainted by harassment.

Fox took Mr. Carlson, its most popular host, off the air after the company's leadership concluded he was more of a problem than an asset and had to go.

Fox faces a second defamation case by another voting technology company. Smartmatic, like Dominion, says Fox knowingly spread false information about its products, baselessly claiming that they contributed to election fraud in 2020.

The accusations against Fox by Ms. Grossberg, 42, sprang partly from the Dominion case. In March, she filed a lawsuit in Delaware, claiming that Fox coerced her into lying in sworn testimony she gave in the case. Ms. Grossberg amended her witness testimony before the Dominion trial,

presenting another hurdle for Fox's legal team, which had already been dealt a series of blows in pretrial rulings.

Ms. Grossberg also filed a separate lawsuit in New York that accused Fox and Mr. Carlson of allowing a culture of rampant misogyny. She said she had been subjected to sexist and antisemitic harassment during her time as the head of booking on “Tucker Carlson Tonight.”

Fox fired Ms. Grossberg four days after she filed the two lawsuits, saying in a statement at the time that she had disclosed privileged information about the Dominion case. She withdrew the Delaware suit in May, but her lawyer said at the time that they planned to refile in New York.

Ms. Grossberg joined Fox News in 2019 as a senior producer for the host Maria Bartiromo. In August 2022, she moved to Mr. Carlson's team as the head of booking.

In her lawsuit, Ms. Grossberg said she found a workplace tainted by misogyny and harassment, where male producers were openly sexist to her and her co-workers, made crude jokes and had decorated the space with photos of Nancy Pelosi, then the House speaker, in a swimsuit showing cleavage.

Ms. Grossberg never met Mr. Carlson, who worked mostly from his homes in Florida and Maine, but she corresponded with him frequently over email, text and video calls. Mr. Carlson's staff in New York was led by Mr. Wells, the senior executive producer. (Mr. Wells was fired by Fox in April.)

After filing her lawsuits, Ms. Grossberg drip-fed audio recordings from her time at Fox to other media organizations. The recordings showed, among other things, Mr. Carlson's immense influence on the Republican Party; an admission by Rudolph W. Giuliani, lawyer to former President Donald J. Trump, that he didn't have evidence of voter fraud; and discussions between Senator Ted Cruz of Texas and Ms. Bartiromo about his attempts to audit the 2020 election results.

Mr. Filippatos, the lawyer for Ms. Grossberg, confirmed that he had been contacted by the office of the special counsel investigating Mr. Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election, and that he and his client were cooperating. At least 90 tapes had been retrieved, and Ms. Grossberg's legal team was forensically analyzing all of Ms. Grossberg's devices in case there were any additional recordings, Mr. Filippatos said.

Ms. Grossberg said she would not comment further on her accusations against Fox or her time at the company, but would “continue to speak out on issues and causes that I believe in, including journalism, equality, dignity and respect in the workplace.”



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Sports

The New York Times

TENNIS | WIMBLEDON



At the Boodles, held on the grounds of a former country club called Stoke Park, from left: Guests arriving on Wednesday; lunch being served; and removing rain coverings from the practice courts.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Sebastian Korda playing Borna Coric at the Boodles this week. Players relish the tournament as an opportunity to readjust to playing on grass. It also gave Korda a chance to get in a round of golf.

# To Tune Up for This Major, Go to a Lavish Garden Party

**The Boodles is a tournament and high-end jewelry show on a 300-acre private estate.**

By MATTHEW FUTTERMAN

LONDON — Even for the best tennis players in the world, the days before a Grand Slam can be filled with nerves and stress, especially the time leading up to Wimbledon, the grandest Grand Slam of them all.

Days can become a blur of hunting for hitting partners and time on the limited practice courts a tournament has available, or one last try to win some tour-level matches at competitions in Eastbourne or Majorca.

A handful of pros, including several clients of Patricio Apey, a longtime agent, end up at a classic English garden party called the Boodles that is unlike nearly anything else on the tennis calendar — a Gatsby-like few days on an estate outside London that makes Wimbledon’s All England Club, supposedly the apotheo-

sis of tennis elegance, feel like a gathering of the masses at the local park.

“Driving in this morning, I was kind of shocked,” Lorenzo Musetti, the rising star from Italy, said of the 300-acre property that the Ambani family of India bought for roughly \$70 million in 2021. “Not every day you see a property like this.”

Or a high-end jewelry show masquerading as a tennis event at a sprawling former country club called Stoke Park that is now one of the private residences of one of the world’s richest families.

“The best event we do all year,” said Michael Wainwright, the managing director of Boodles, the Liverpool- and London-based jewelry company that his family has owned since 1880.

When he started the Boodles two decades ago, Apey wasn’t thinking about putting on a tennis event that would feel more like a polo match. He just knew that players who won Wimbledon made more money than players who won the other major tournaments. (Wimbledon’s men’s and women’s singles champions will

earn nearly \$3 million each this year.)

He represented a number of players who excelled on clay courts but not on grass. They struggled to acclimate during the few weeks between the French Open and Wimbledon because they often lost early in the few tournaments available during the brief grass court season.

“I needed to get them more matches,” Apey said.

The only way for him to do that, he reasoned, was to create a grass court exhibition event near London ahead of Wimbledon. Stoke Park, with its some two-dozen-bedroom mansion, a rolling golf course — tennis players love to relax with rounds of golf — and immaculate grass tennis courts provided the perfect location.

Through an acquaintance, he landed a meeting with Wainwright and his older brother, Nicholas, who warmed to the idea. It was a soft sell opportunity: Put their jewelry in front of hundreds of their top customers and thousands more in the upper echelon of the tennis demographic (think pocket squares and long,

flowery summer dresses) whiling away a summer afternoon drinking champagne and Pimm’s, eating multicourse catered lunches, enjoying high tea, browsing a tented pavilion filled with sparkling baubles and perhaps taking in some tennis in a small stadium under high trees surrounded by perfectly manicured gardens.

Boodles sponsors another high-end sports event, the Cheltenham Gold Cup, a well-heeled equestrian race, but women like tennis more, Wainwright said, and horse racing doesn’t offer the same “dwell time” that tennis does.

In other words, with all of tennis’s changeovers and the breaks between sets and matches, and the fact that the matches don’t actually matter, the 10,000 patrons who come to the five days of the Boodles tennis event have plenty of time to peruse that \$2.9 million diamond ring, or the more affordable \$80,000 necklace. There were several cases of Patek Philippe watches on display as well.

Boodles also threw an evening gala on the Stoke Park grounds for roughly 40 of

its top customers Wednesday night. Wine and Champagne flowed, and jewelry was sold, into the small hours of the morning.

For players, the Boodles offers an appearance fee and — just as valuable — a chance to chill. Sebastian Korda and his coach, Radek Stepanek, joined Wainwright for a round of golf earlier in the week.

There is an expansive gym for the growing cohort of lifting obsessives on the tour. Perhaps most important are the moments of calm practice on the Stoke Park grass before the chaos of Wimbledon.

“It’s a chance to work on a few things,” said Korda, who played in Eastbourne the week before Wimbledon last year and lost his first match.

Borna Coric of Croatia, who was winless in two grass court tournaments this year, said he had arrived at Stoke Park this week harried and worried about his form. He had then climbed into bed in a luxurious room.

“I had the best night of sleep I’ve had in weeks,” Coric said.



**‘Not every day you see a property like this.’**  
LORENZO MUSETTI, an Italian player.

From far left: A Champagne reception in the Boodles tent, where guests can buy luxury jewelry and watches; Andrey Rublev before his match with Felix Auger-Aliassime.



TENNIS | WIMBLEDON

# King Supports Talks on Holding Women’s Tennis Events in Saudi Arabia

By **MATTHEW FUTTERMAN**

LONDON — Billie Jean King, the leading architect of women’s professional tennis who is widely regarded as the first female athlete-activist, said Friday that she supported talks between the women’s tour and Saudi Arabia on holding competitions in the kingdom, despite its abysmal record on human rights.

“I’m a huge believer in engagement — I don’t think you change unless you engage,” King said Friday at an event celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the WTA, the women’s professional tour. “I would probably go there and talk to them.”

After King’s comments, Steve Simon, the chief executive of the WTA Tour, said women’s tennis was seriously evaluating partnerships with Saudi Arabia. He suggested that potentially holding events there would be a way to support “progress” for women, while the country is trying to become a destination for major sports.

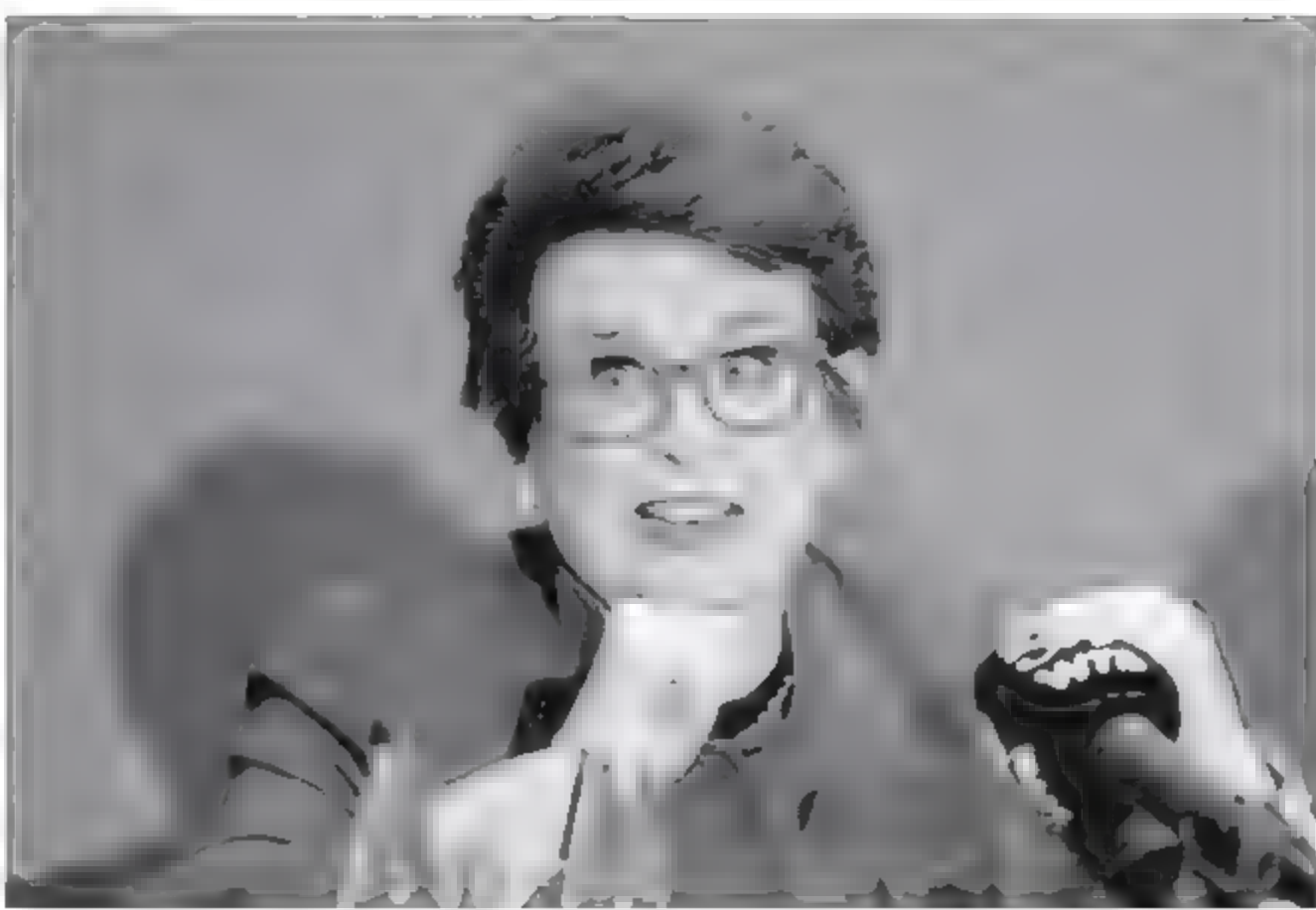
“Sometimes when you are in the position we are in, you need to sup-

port the change,” Simon said, referring to the tour’s commitment to gender pay equity and its loss of revenue during the pandemic and an 18-month suspension of operations in China over Peng Shuai.

He said Saudi Arabia had “a long way to go,” especially in its laws banning homosexuality, but that change was underway in the country. “You want them to do what they are doing” and support that, he added.

The comments from King and Simon were the strongest signal yet that Saudi Arabia is expanding and accelerating its efforts to become a part of not just men’s tennis but also women’s, among other sports like soccer, Formula 1 and golf. The Saudi wealth fund’s LIV Golf circuit recently agreed to a merger with golf’s PGA Tour after an acrimonious rivalry that included litigation and the loss of a handful of the tour’s biggest stars to the upstart league.

Looking to avoid that scenario and always on the hunt for new investors, tennis executives have spoken openly of their ongoing discussions with Saudi officials



“I’m a huge believer in engagement — I don’t think you change unless you engage,” Billie Jean King said Friday at a WTA event.

about holding tournaments there as soon as this year. Saudi Arabia is bidding to become the host of the Next Gen Finals, a men’s event for 21-and-under players scheduled for December. Saudi Arabia’s bid includes the option of holding a women’s Next Gen

event there as well.

Simon traveled to Riyadh in February with other WTA executives and players for meetings with Saudi officials.

The issue is especially complicated for the women’s tennis tour in part because there are a num-

ber of openly gay players, including Daria Kasatkina of Russia, who is ranked No. 11 in the world and often travels with her partner. The men’s tour does not have any players who are openly gay.

Sloane Stephens, a member of the WTA Tour Players’ Council, said it was important for L.G.B.T.Q. players to feel safe while competing in Saudi Arabia.

“That is part of the evaluation,” Stephens said. “We want to make sure everyone is safe and comfortable and feels supported.”

King is openly gay as well, but she cited the WTA’s decision to play in Doha beginning in 2008 as a precedent for supporting countries who say they want to become more progressive. Simon said that, during his visit to Riyadh, he had noticed some of the same changes that Doha had said it wanted to make 15 years ago when women had “zero rights” and there were concerns about whether the players would be safe wearing short, sleeveless tennis outfits.

“It’s about celebrating the betterment of women, that there is

change coming,” Simon said. “I’m not Saying Saudi Arabia is a place we should be doing business with. They have a long way to go, but they are making changes.”

Simon said there was no timetable for making a decision about the WTA going to Saudi Arabia.

**A WTA official says there’s ‘a long way to go’ on human rights.**

However, the tour has yet to announce a location for its season-ending Tour Finals. The tour and the Chinese government are currently negotiating the future of that event. The WTA suspended its operations in China for 18 months after player Peng Shuai was seemingly silenced after she appeared to accuse a former top government official of sexually assaulting her and the tour was unable to contact her.

GOLF



Greg Norman, the LIV Golf commissioner, appears to be reluctant to testify before senators about the agreement with the PGA Tour.

## Senators Thwarted in Assembling Witness List on Merger

By **ALAN BLINDER and KEVIN DRAPER**

The Capitol Hill meeting room has been booked, the senators’ calendars cleared. But less than two weeks before a Senate subcommittee wants to hold a hearing about the PGA Tour’s planned venture with Saudi Arabia’s sovereign wealth fund, the panel’s ambitions for high-profile witnesses are encountering significant resistance.

There is almost no prospect that the wealth fund’s governor, Yasir al-Rumayyan, will voluntarily go before Congress, on July 11 or ever. The PGA Tour’s commissioner, Jay Monahan, is on medical leave. And LIV Golf, a Saudi-financed league, is balking at sending Greg Norman, who won two British Opens in the decades before he became the circuit’s commissioner and lightning rod, to speak to the Senate’s Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

The dispute over witnesses, only weeks into the panel’s examination of the deal, suggests that the inquiry could be turbulent. Lawmakers are especially frustrated by LIV’s offer to send Gary Davidson, its acting chief operating officer, to the hearing instead of Norman.

“We have requested testimony from Greg Norman, and unless there is a reasonable explanation for his absence — which we have not yet been provided — Greg Norman is who we expect to appear,” Maria McElwain, the communications director for Senator Richard Blumenthal, the Connecticut Democrat who is chairman of the subcommittee, said in a statement.

LIV declined to comment on Friday, but a person familiar with the circuit’s thinking, who requested anonymity to discuss private negotiations with Congress, said the league believed that Davidson was more steeped in its day-to-day operations and the potential ramifications of the deal that has rocked golf since it was announced on June 6. Norman and Davidson were not involved in the secret talks that led to the deal.

Under the structure envisioned in a five-page framework agreement signed behind closed doors

on May 30, the business operations of the PGA Tour, LIV and the European Tour, known as the DP World Tour — such as television rights and sponsorships — would be brought into a new for-profit company. The plan calls for the PGA Tour to control a majority of the board’s seats, for Monahan to be the company’s chief executive, and for the tour to maintain authority over many professional golf tournaments.

But Saudi Arabia’s wealth fund would have extensive investment rights, and al-Rumayyan is positioned to become the company’s chairman, assuring the Saudis of significant sway over men’s professional golf if the deal closes.

The planned venture has drawn weeks of scorn and skepticism from Washington, where lawmakers

The senators, who have not subpoenaed any executives, had hoped to firm up the witness list by the middle of this week, but on Friday their panel was still bargaining with the tour, the wealth fund and LIV.

The hearing, if it happens, will be among the most significant opportunities to date for golf executives to ease concerns about the planned transaction. But the proceeding, like any appearance before Congress, carries risks. A single misstep could intensify the public firestorm or, perhaps more troublingly for the deal’s supporters, encourage government officials to take an even more exacting look at the pact. (Antitrust experts, for instance, have predicted that Monahan’s assertion on June 6 that the deal will “take the competitor off of the board” will intensify the Justice Department’s scrutiny.)

Norman, in particular, has a history of drawing criticism. Last year, for instance, he played down Saudi responsibility for the murder of the Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, saying, “Look, we’ve all made mistakes.” In recent months, he has made relatively few public comments, and he and his representatives have declined interview requests from The New York Times.

But when Blumenthal and Johnson wrote to him on June 21, they said the subcommittee “respectfully requests that you appear in-person to testify.” LIV executives said Norman would be traveling abroad at the time, and they privately objected to the commissioner being subjected to congressional inquiry without his PGA Tour counterpart enduring the same scrutiny, which seems likely given Monahan’s medical leave.

Monahan’s indefinite absence has complicated the tour’s representation at the hearing. The two executives named to lead the tour on an interim basis, Tyler Dennis and Ron Price, were not involved in the deal talks.

Al-Rumayyan, however, was. But his appearance on Capitol Hill was never considered probable. One of Saudi Arabia’s most influential figures, he rarely gives interviews outside of tightly controlled settings, and lawyers representing him and the Saudi gov-

ernment waged an aggressive fight to keep him from being deposed in golf-related litigation in the United States. (The litigation was dropped as a part of the tentative deal — one of the few binding components of the framework agreement — and al-Rumayyan never gave sworn testimony.)

The wealth fund declined to comment on Friday. The tour, in a statement, said it was “cooperating with the subcommittee’s requests for information and having productive conversations with them about who will represent the PGA Tour on July 11th.”

It added, “We look forward to answering their questions about the framework agreement that keeps the PGA Tour as the leader of professional golf’s future and benefits our players, our fans and our sport.”

The wealth fund and the tour are deploying armies of lobbyists, lawyers and political fixers to try to smooth the deal’s path. Before going on leave to recuperate from a “medical situation” that the tour has declined to describe, Monahan wrote to lawmakers to defend the agreement. He also complained that Congress had not given the tour enough support to withstand a Saudi “attempt to take over the game of golf in the United States,” as he put it.

“We were largely left on our own to fend off the attacks, ostensibly due to the United States’ complex geopolitical alliance with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” Monahan wrote.

It is not clear whether the Senate panel will escalate its efforts to secure testimony from Norman, or any of the other witnesses they requested, especially before the July 11 hearing. Most lawmakers are away from Washington for the Senate’s Independence Day break, and few are expected to return to Capitol Hill until the week of the hearing.

The hearing’s current timing, though, could be fortuitous for golf leaders. Public attention will turn the following week to the British Open, which will be played at Royal Liverpool. Cameron Smith, who joined LIV not long after his victory last July on the Old Course at St. Andrews, will try to defend his title at golf’s last major tournament of the year.

## In a Cost-Cutting Measure, ESPN Announces Layoffs Of On-Air Personalities

By **CLAIRE FAHY**

In a move that surprised many sports fans and underscored the challenges for media companies, ESPN announced Friday that it had laid off some broadcast journalists in hopes of saving money.

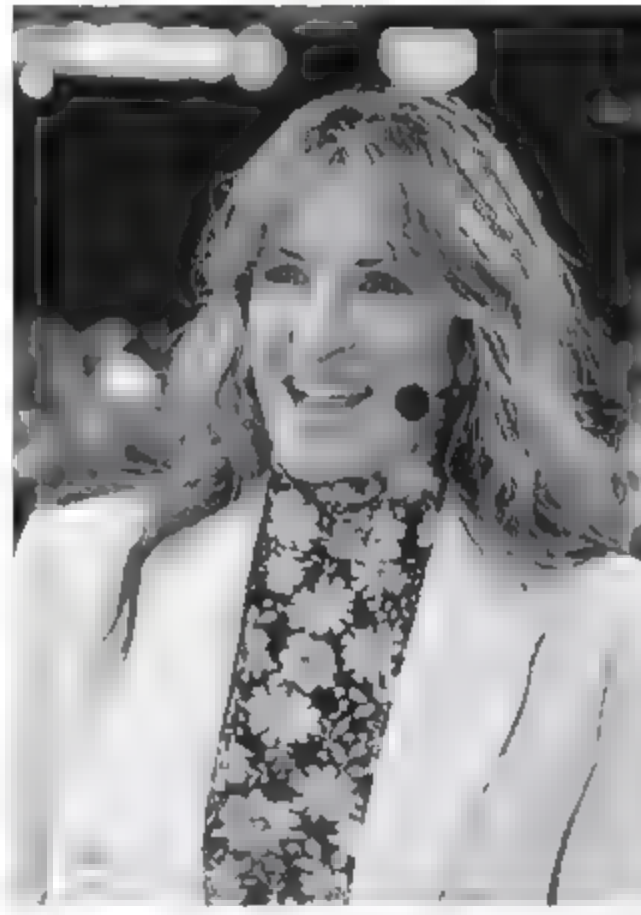
ESPN said in a statement that it needed to cut costs “in the area of public-facing commentator salaries,” including “a small group of job cuts in the short term.” The layoffs included some of the network’s biggest names.

Suzy Kolber, an N.F.L. reporter and the host of the pregame show “Monday Night Countdown,” publicly acknowledged in a Twitter post on Friday afternoon that she had been laid off. “Today I join the many hard-working colleagues who have been laid off,” she said. “Heartbreaking, but 27 years at ESPN was a good run.”

Jeff Van Gundy, the former coach of the New York Knicks who had been an N.B.A. analyst with ESPN, was also let go. Van Gundy had worked at ESPN since 2007, according to his company biography. Jalen Rose, a studio analyst and a member of the University of Michigan’s storied “Fab Five,” was also among those laid off. The layoffs of Van Gundy and Rose were first reported by The New York Post and were confirmed by The New York Times.

Joon Lee, a baseball reporter, and Ashley Brewer, an anchor who had worked on the network’s flagship show “SportsCenter,” also said on Twitter that they had left the company.

In all, about 20 commentators were laid off, and the company told staff members that it would renegotiate some contracts at reduced salaries or let some expire at the end of their terms, said a person familiar with the situation who was not authorized to reveal the details and spoke on condition of anonymity.



Suzy Kolber, above, an N.F.L. reporter and the host of the pregame show “Monday Night Countdown,” was with ESPN for 27 years. Jeff Van Gundy, below, the former coach of the Knicks, had called some of the biggest N.B.A. games, including those in this year’s finals.



cially proud of.” Her company biography states that she has been “widely praised for elevating the N.F.L. sideline role” and notes that she was the first woman to win the Maxwell Football Club’s Sports Broadcaster of the Year Award. In 2019, she was inducted into the Philadelphia Sports Hall of Fame.

Van Gundy has become a familiar voice in professional basketball. He was courtside for coverage on both ESPN and ABC, working with one of his former players, Mark Jackson, and Mike Breen to call some of the biggest N.B.A. games. This month, he provided commentary during the N.B.A. finals.

Rose first gained national attention as a point guard at the University of Michigan, where his team reached back-to-back N.C.A.A. Division 1 men’s basketball tournament finals in 1992 and 1993, losing both times. His star-studded recruiting class was known as the Fab Five, and Michigan made history as the first team to start five freshmen in the Final Four. He reached the 2000 N.B.A. finals with the Indiana Pacers. Rose had been with ESPN since 2007.

### The Background

The news comes one day after National Geographic announced its second round of layoffs this year, joining The Los Angeles Times, Vox Media, BuzzFeed and The Washington Post on the list of media companies that have tightened their belts recently.

Disney, ESPN’s parent company, has struggled to stem the tide of losses related to its streaming services as traditional television viewing declines. In May, Disney announced on its earnings call that revenue from its networks, which include ESPN, had fallen 7 percent. Earlier this year, the company’s chief executive, Robert A. Iger, announced a plan to cut \$5.5 billion in costs by eliminating 7,000 jobs, which is 4 percent of Disney’s worldwide work force.

### Why It Matters

Kolber said in her announcement that “longevity for a woman in this business is something I’m espe-

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BASEBALL

# Facing His Former Team, a New Yorker Who Is Thriving Back Home

By MATT MARTELL

Minutes before Major League Baseball's trading deadline last season, Paul DeJong, the short-stop for the St. Louis Cardinals, received a notification on his phone. It was a message in the team group chat from center fielder Harrison Bader, one of DeJong's closest friends.

"He said, 'Sorry, guys, but they told me I've just been traded to the Yankees,'" DeJong recalled. "I didn't believe it at first. I was like, 'Why the heck did we trade our best outfielder?' I was honestly shocked."

That was the reaction throughout the St. Louis clubhouse that afternoon as word spread that the Cardinals had agreed to send Bader, who is from Bronxville, N.Y., to the Yankees for the left-handed starting pitcher Jordan Montgomery, a rare one-for-one swap between playoff contenders.

The move was a surprising pivot for the Cardinals, who in late 2018 had positioned Bader as their center fielder of the future. A dynamic athlete with golden locks unfurling from his cap, he had emerged as an elite defender and base runner with the potential to become an above-average hitter. But his results thus far had struggled to live up to his hype.

"It was challenging," Bader said about getting traded. "As happy as I was to be in the new organization — especially the Yankees, my hometown and everything — I just still couldn't get over the fact that I felt like I had so much unfinished business in St. Louis."

This weekend, as Bader returns to Busch Stadium to face his former team for the first time, the trade appears to have been the almost mythical win-win. Montgomery solidified the St. Louis rotation down the stretch last season, and he has continued to pitch well this year despite his team's woes. Bader, even with time missed because of injuries, has finally looked like the player the Cardinals always thought he could be.

"It was only a matter of time before it really clicked for him," said Stubby Clapp, the first-base coach of the Cardinals, who had managed Bader in the minor leagues. "When you get him on the field and he's healthy, he's going to do good things. He brings everything to the team that you need."

The biggest difference for Bader since he joined the Yankees is his power at the plate. Including his strong postseason last year, in which he batted .333 with five home runs and a 1.262 on-base plus slugging percentage, Bader



GREGORY HEISLER USA TODAY SPORTS, VIA REUTERS



ED ZURBERA GETTY IMAGES

Harrison Bader as a Cardinal with his close friend Paul DeJong last year, left, and after hitting a home run for the Yankees in May. His slugging percentage is much higher as a Yankee.

Busch Stadium more than Bader, whose .634 O.P.S. at that park is the worst for any player with at least 500 career plate appearances. In his 865 plate appearances away from Busch Stadium as a Cardinal, his O.P.S. was .820 — the same O.P.S. that the Hall of Famers Rickey Henderson and Harold Baines had for their careers.

"I think Busch could have gotten in his head a little bit, because he does have a lot of natural power," DeJong said. "I think maybe he got mentally a little discouraged by it."

The proverbial change of scenery is perhaps the least scientific of the remedies that people in baseball prescribe for underperforming players, but that doesn't mean it can't work. That said, when the Yankees are involved in a change-of-scenery swap, the player in need of starting over is usually heading away from New York.

And yet, both DeJong and Jordan Hicks, a Cardinals reliever, said New York was the perfect

place for their friend to play, for reasons that went beyond the hitter-friendly stadium. "He was born and raised there," Hicks said.

"It's like coming home for him," DeJong said. "I think that means a lot to him. I think he's super emotional as far as, like, how much he cares and values little things like what uniform he wears, or where he's playing, or who's around him. I think those little environmental things can really be positive triggers for him."

The spotlight has never really faded Bader. Having grown up in the suburbs of New York, he is familiar with the city's frenetic atmosphere and the pressure that comes with playing for one of its professional teams.

"I'm extremely comfortable here," he said. "I'm extremely comfortable, but it's an incredibly uncomfortable environment. There's a lot of pressure at all times. There's a lot of noise. Even when you wake up in the morning and you start your day, it's just — if you take a step back and you kind of zoom out for a second, I

mean, it's absolutely insane."

He added: "I find ways to just settle into those moments where the noise couldn't be louder, the fans couldn't want more success. All these things make me better."

Bader has made the Yankees better, too. This season, they are 24-11 in games in which he has played and 21-25 without him. Naturally, those records also reveal the biggest problem for Bader since he arrived in New York: staying healthy.

He was on the injured list with plantar fasciitis when the Cardinals traded him on Aug. 2, and he didn't make his Yankees debut un-

**'It was only a matter of time before it really clicked for him.'**

til Sept. 20 — 42 games later. He strained an oblique during spring training and missed the first 30 games of this season, and then missed 16 more with a hamstring injury.

The Yankees acquired Bader so they could move the 6-foot-7, 282-pound Aaron Judge back to right field, his primary position. Instead, because of Bader's injuries, the Yankees have had to use not just Judge in center, but also Isiah Kiner-Falefa, an infielder and catcher who before this season had never played the outfield in a major league game.

Finding a way to keep Bader on the field is crucial for the Yankees, but also for his own future in baseball. A free agent after this season, the 29-year-old remains, in the words of Hicks, "one of the best outfielders I've ever seen play the game." If he keeps improving at the plate and avoids another injury, he could be one of the more sought-after players in the coming off-season.

That such a payday is possible shows just how far Bader has come in less than a year since he last wore a Cardinals uniform. Being traded stung, but as much as he loved his time in St. Louis, leaving was probably a blessing.

"It was a really important reminder," Bader said. "Everybody has grand plans all the time. There's always going to be a situation in life, whether it's related to your career, where somebody just yanks the rug out from under you, and you have to find a way to just keep moving."

"And so far, it's worked out."

KEEPING SCORE

## A 19th-Century Pioneer of Perfection, and a Whole Lot More

By BENJAMIN HOFFMAN

Any time a pitcher throws a perfect game, as Domingo Germán of the Yankees did on Wednesday, the list of previous pitchers who performed the feat is trotted out. The names are famous (Sandy Koufax! Cy Young!) and decidedly less famous (Dallas Braden?).

At the top of that list, and fairly easy to scroll past, are a pair of names separated from the others by nearly 25 years.

1. **Lee Richmond**, Worcester, 6/12/1880
2. **John Ward**, Providence, 6/17/1880

Beyond the list of perfect games, their names aren't familiar to modern audiences. Even their clubs are defunct. In some ways it can seem as if they exist solely to be credited for having pioneered a feat that remains decidedly rare to this day. And occasionally they do not even get that, as many news outlets limit their lists to baseball's so-called modern era, which began in 1901.

Richmond at least gets the distinction of being first, and his perfect game against the Cleveland Blues was easily the highlight of his sporting career. But if you take the time to learn about Ward, who matched Richmond's perfection in a game against the Buffalo Bisons five days later, you will find that retiring all 27 batters he faced on a Thursday afternoon at Messer Street Grounds in Providence, R.I., was just one line on a résumé that could make even Shohei Ohtani envious.

Ohtani's ability to pitch and hit is awe-inspiring, but Ward, who was born in 1860 and was known by many as Monte for his middle name, Montgomery, did even more. He pitched a perfect game, won a National League E.R.A. title, collected 164 wins as a pitcher and 2,107 hits as a position player, had a 111-stolen-base season, became a lawyer, organized a union, formed his own professional league and, just for fun, developed such a strong golf game that he finished second in a prestigious tournament.

"With Ward, it's hard to stop



GEORGE PRINCE VIA LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Monte Ward, center in an 1894 photo, had led the Giants to championships in 1888 and 1889.

writing superlatives!" said David Stevens, author of "Baseball's Radical for All Seasons: A Biography of John Montgomery Ward."

Pitching and playing the field was more common in the 19th century, but John Thorn, the official historian for Major League Baseball, said in an email that Ward had stood out even among his peers — and not just for his playing.

"Versatility was indeed more common in professional baseball's early years," Thorn said. "But Ward was uncommonly proficient as a pitcher, as an infielder-outfielder and as an author. Unlike the ghosted biographies of figures like King Kelly or Cap Anson, Ward was a college graduate and attorney who actually wrote, in 1889, 'Baseball: How to Become a Player,' with a fine historical section."

Ward omitted from the book his own accomplishments — which, according to Stevens, included being able to play as a fielder using either arm to throw — but even the short version of his career paints a picture of a player so outstanding that it is shocking his name isn't better known.

A standout pitcher for Provi-

dence in his early years, Ward played the outfield and then shortstop for the New York Giants after injuring an arm, helping lead that team to two championships. As Thorn once wrote, "Long before Reggie Jackson, he was New York's Mr. October."

Ward was a huge star, and he set himself apart further by understanding the value of that stardom. He helped form a players' union in the National League and later broke from the N.L. entirely to form the Players' League, an N.L. rival that was so far ahead of its time it had a revenue-sharing system for its owners and had no reserve clause binding players to teams.

His league ultimately failed, but Ward kept moving, serving as a manager of several N.L. clubs and as a team president for the Boston Braves, and then traveling the world to compete in top amateur golf competitions. In 1903, he finished second at the prestigious North and South Amateur at Pinehurst in North Carolina. The New York Times provided daily coverage of the tournament, including praise of Ward's efforts in the final round, but did not even mention his baseball career.

That type of snub would only continue.

With a career that nearly anyone would envy, he wasn't inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame until 1964, nearly 40 years after he died. And even upon receiving that honor from the old-timers' committee, he went mostly overlooked: The headline the next day in The Times named the other four players the committee had chosen, mentioning Ward only in the final two paragraphs of the story.

"Nineteenth-century worthies were largely overlooked after Anson, Kelly and Ewing got in," Thorn said of Ward's long wait. "One-time 'immortals' were consigned to the dustbin." (Buck Ewing was a catcher who had been inducted in 1939.)

Stevens said Ward's personality had played a role in his being written out of history. "His progressive efforts always limited his success in staying in the game he loved," Stevens said, citing Ward's having challenged the Spalding Committee's assertion that Abner Doubleday invented the game as a thorny issue that rankled the establishment. Ward's liberal politics, which included pushing for the inclusion of Black, Hispanic and



GODWIN & CO. VIA LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

A cigarette card in 1888, eight years after his perfect game, featured Ward recreating one of the 111 stolen bases he had the previous season. Ward also was an author, golfer and lawyer.



BAIN NEWS-SERVICE VIA LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Native American players, may have influenced opinions as well.

With a legacy full of innovation and progressive ideas, it comes as no surprise that he had thoughts on building the sport — still hyphenated as base-ball at the time — into something even bigger and better.

One of the ideas he presented in his book, which is still in print thanks to the Society for American Baseball Research, continues to resonate when you consider that baseball's biggest issues are its aging fan base and the fact that many of the best athletes in the United States choose to play other sports. As Ward wrote:

*"The only thing now lacking to forever establish base-ball as our national sport is a more liberal encouragement of the amateur element. Professional base-ball may have its ups and downs according as its directors may be wise or the contrary, but the foundation upon which it all is built, its hold upon the future, is in the amateur enthusiasm for the game. The professional game must always be confined to the larger towns, but every hamlet may have its amateur team, and let us see to it that their games are encouraged."*



# Joseph Pedott, 91, Dies; Ad Executive Who Made Zany Chia Pets a Craze

By ALEX TRAUB

Joseph Pedott, whose decades of commercials for the zany plant-like figurines known as Chia Pets launched them into the pantheon of American consumer culture, died on June 22 in San Francisco. He was 91.

The cause was cardiac arrest, said Sherry Ettleson, a family friend.

The origins of the Chia Pet's popularity can be traced to March 1977, when Mr. Pedott (pronounced PEE-dot), an independent advertising executive, wandered around a Chicago home and housewares trade expo looking for new clients. He asked the head of sales at the Thrifty drugstore

*He scored another success with the Clapper and its ‘Clap on, clap off’ slogan.*

chain about his best-selling product.

“He said, ‘There’s this stupid item called the Chia Pet. I don’t know why anybody buys it,’” Mr. Pedott later recalled.

The sales executive faxed Mr. Pedott a picture of the stupid item in question. It was a terra cotta figurine manufactured in Oaxaca, Mexico, sold along with a chia seed spread. When watered for a week or two, the seeds sprouted hairlike grass.

However odd the Chia Pet might have seemed, Mr. Pedott, unlike the sales executive, did not judge consumers for liking it. He decided that Chia Pets were missing only one thing: good advertising.

He bought the rights from their importer, a man named Walter Houston; secured a better deal from the manufacturers in Mexico; and, by the early 1980s, had begun widely marketing his new product with a jingle that consisted of a breathy female voice

exclaiming “ch-ch-ch-Chia.”

The campaign worked. In 2018, Mr. Pedott’s company, Joseph Enterprises, announced that Americans had bought about 25 million Chia Pets. Tens of millions more people who never owned a Chia Pet still gained a vivid sense of what they were — though not as objects in real life so much as figments of the half-real world of television.

The ads labeled Chia Pets “the pottery that grows.” Was that fantastical promotion for a gag gift or for home décor? The Chia Pet, somehow, became both, much like another infomercial bauble: Big Mouth Billy Bass, the wall hanging that is also a talking fish.

Chia Pet’s competitors over the years have included other inanimate objects marketed as pets — most notably Pet Rock, a ventilated box containing a rock on a bed of straw, and Tamagotchi, the hand-held digital pet. The first was a fad of the 1970s, the second a fad of the 1990s.

Maybe thanks to its pseudobotanical organicness, the Chia Pet retained a firmer hold on popular affection, as evinced by the surprisingly wide range of human activities for which it has become a metaphor.

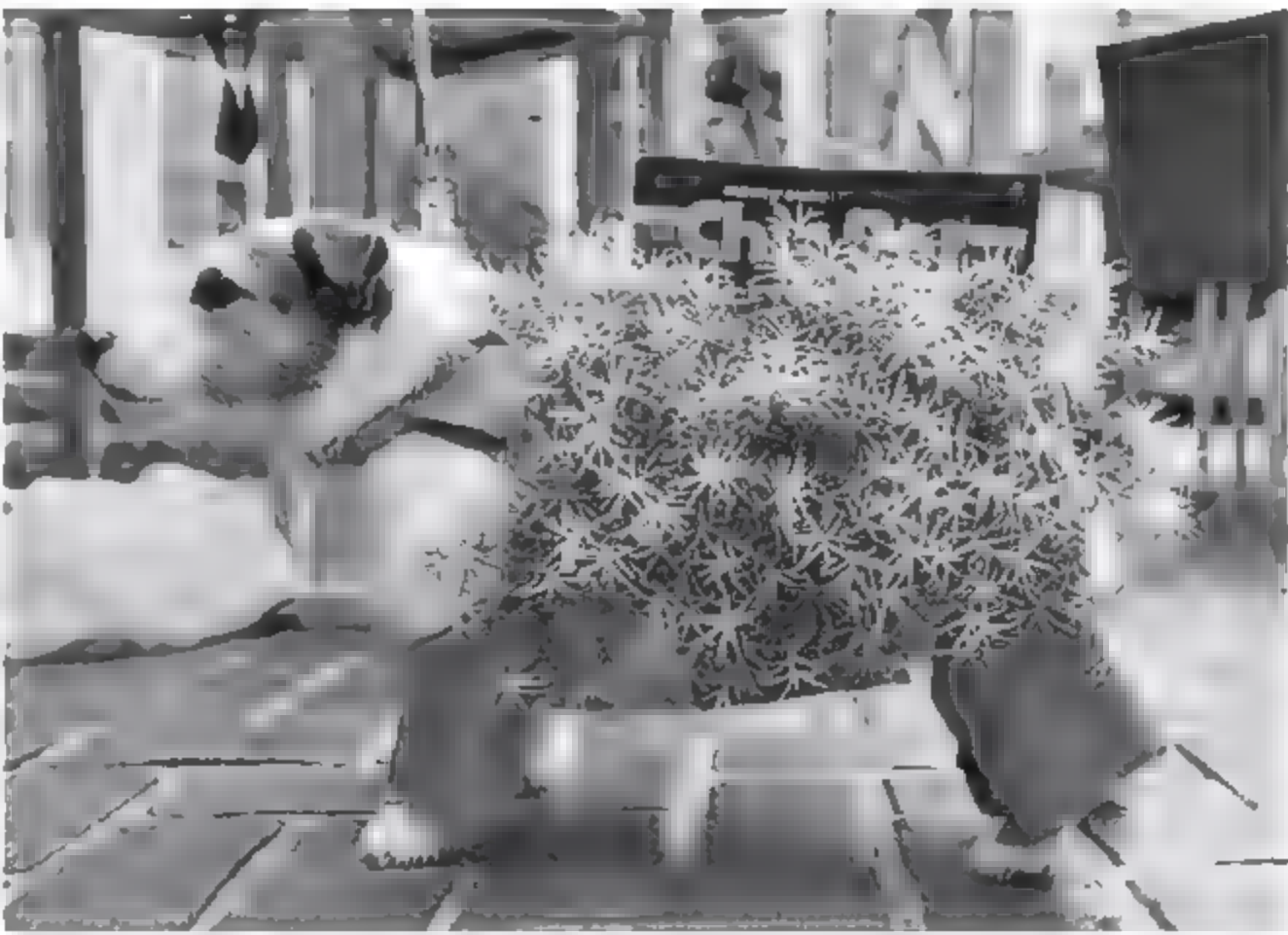
The New York Times critic Roberta Smith described Jeff Koons’s 1992 sculpture “Puppy” as “a shaggy dog made entirely of flowers, and the biggest Chia Pet ever.” The Chia Pet became likened to a hairstyle, with the term being used to describe the coiffures of the 1990s New York Knicks power forward Charles Oakley, the renegade former House Democrat James A. Traficant Jr. of Ohio, Ben Affleck in “Argo” (2012) and Bradley Cooper in “American Hustle” (2013). The uncontrollable growth of Chia Pet hair inspired the Times columnist Maureen Dowd to write in 1998, the year President Bill Clinton was impeached, about “wacky independent counsels who grow like Chia Pets.”

Rock bands called themselves Chia Pet, and, more surprisingly, novelists used it as a name for their characters.

As a barometer of fame, getting



JAY WATSON



MANUEL NUAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESS; GETTY IMAGES

A Jack Russell terrier was a Chia Pet for a Halloween contest in 2011. Mr. Pedott did not judge consumers for liking Chia Pets.

a Chia Pet modeled after you has become a distinction far rarer than getting your own bobblehead. Those so honored include Willie Nelson, Bob Ross, Barack Obama and Donald Trump. It is an equally exclusive club for fictional characters, including Scooby Doo, Chewbacca, Bugs Bunny and Bart Simpson.

In a sign of ultimate triumph, Chia Pets grew more recognizable than chia seeds themselves. “First there were Chia Pets,” The New York Times wrote in 2012.

“Now, chia is having a second life as a nutritional ‘it’ item.”

Mr. Pedott scored another notable success with the Clapper, which he began marketing in the mid-1980s. It enables household items to be turned on or off through clapping, predicting our current age of controlling your front door, refrigerator and thermostat with a cellphone.

Though the Clapper did not become a pop-culture phenomenon like the Chia Pet — or sell nearly as well — it did inspire the slogan



JOSEPH ENTERPRISES VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

A kitten version of the Chia Pet. There are also Chia Pets modeled after famous people.

“Clap on, clap off,” which joined the Chia Pet jingle as an unforgettable bit of late-20th-century televised ballyhoo.

In 2019, Ad Age asked Mr. Pedott for the secret to a memorable ad.

“We just stayed with it,” he said.

“‘Ch-ch-ch-Chia.’ Repetition works.”

Joseph Pedott was born on April 14, 1932, in Chicago to Meyer Pedott, a doctor in the Army and the Veterans Administration, and Jean (Segal) Pedott, a homemaker. Joe’s mother died of a cerebral hemorrhage when he was 13. He and his father often fought, which led Joe to run away from home when he was 16 and move

# Michael Horodniceanu, 78, Who Oversaw Gigantic New York City Transit Jobs

By DANIEL E. SLOTNIK

Michael Horodniceanu, who as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s president of capital construction helped complete gargantuan, seemingly interminable transit projects in New York City, died on June 22 at a hospice facility in the Bronx. He was 78.

His son Oded said the cause was pancreatic cancer.

From 2008 until 2017, Dr. Horodniceanu oversaw wildly complicated construction projects that cost New York billions of dollars. He tried to ensure that they became boons for the city’s transportation system rather than boondoggles.

“In a construction site, there are always problems,” Dr. Horodniceanu told the M.T.A. board in 2009, after a gap between the platform and track that was about an inch too wide delayed the opening of a more than \$500 million South Ferry subway station. “My job is not to bring the problems, but the solutions.”

There were five ambitious projects under Dr. Horodniceanu’s control: East Side Access, a plan to extend the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal; an extension of the No. 7 train to the Hudson Yards on Manhattan’s Far West Side; the Fulton Transit Center, a thorough redesign of a downtown subway hub that made switching between nine train lines less of an ordeal; the new subway station at South Ferry; and the Second Avenue subway, which Upper East Siders had dreamed about since the Great Depression.

Those last four were completed under Dr. Horodniceanu’s watch. Grand Central Madison, the new L.I.R.R. terminal below Grand Central Station, opened in January.

A genial figure with a mostly white beard who favored flashy

bow ties, Dr. Horodniceanu was often in the hot seat when construction problems arose. Those problems ranged from quotidian delays and cost overruns to more unusual issues, like excavation explosions that shattered windows on the Upper East Side in 2012.

Perhaps the most intractable problem Dr. Horodniceanu faced was the extremely high cost of transportation construction in New York City, which a New York Times investigation in 2017 found was the highest in the world.

That investigation also found that the Grand Central Extension project employed about 200 more workers than the roughly 700 that were needed, and that those extra

*He finished major public projects like the Second Avenue subway line.*

jobs had not been reported to the public when the authority discovered them in 2010.

“Nobody knew what those people were doing, if they were doing anything,” Dr. Horodniceanu told The Times in 2017. He said that the excess workers were laid off, but that no one knew how long they had been employed.

“They were each being paid about \$1,000 every day,” he said.

When the new terminal finally opened this year, the agency put its total cost at \$11.1 billion, or more than six times the average cost of similar projects elsewhere.

At least one construction delay faced by Dr. Horodniceanu originated far beyond the five bor-

oughs: issues with diagonal elevators custom designed in Italy for the No. 7 train station at Hudson Yards, which officials hoped to open in 2013, before Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg left office.

The elevators were made by an Italian company, but project administrators wanted software and components from American manufacturers.

The components functioned separately, but the elevator failed a test in Italy after it was assembled that summer, and lengthy European vacations meant work did not resume for some time. After facing other delays, the extension finally opened in 2015, at a cost of \$2.4 billion.

In 2017, Janno Lieber, a real estate executive who had helped rebuild the World Trade Center complex, replaced Dr. Horodniceanu as the president of the M.T.A.’s capital projects.

Dr. Horodniceanu sent the authority’s board a farewell letter that praised the two subway expansions, and the opening of Fulton Center and the new South Ferry station, as a “grand slam of megaprojects.”

“Working together, we improved the lives of many New Yorkers and forever changed the face of public transportation in the City of New York,” Dr. Horodniceanu wrote. “We made history.”

Michael Filip Horodniceanu (pronounced ho-rod-nee-CHAnoo) was born in Bucharest, Romania, on Aug. 4, 1944, to Filip and Clara (Hascalovici) Horodniceanu.

In 1961, the Horodniceanus followed a wave of Romanian Jews who emigrated to Israel after World War II. They settled in a suburb of Tel Aviv, where Filip worked as an administrator for the national health care system and Clara became a bookkeeper for Elhte, an Israeli chocolate company.

After graduating from high school in Haifa in 1963, Michael served in the Israeli Army. During his time there, he met Bat-Sheva Maltzman at a party. After he got out of the Army, he went to what is now Technion — Israel Institute of Technology, where Ms. Maltzman studied political science and developing countries at Tel Aviv University. They married in 1968.

He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering in 1970 and then moved to the United States, settling in the Forest Hills neighborhood of Queens. He earned a master’s degree in management from Columbia University in 1973, and five years later he completed a doctorate in transportation planning and engineering at what is now the New York



BRIAN HARKIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Michael Horodniceanu in 2011. “My job is not to bring the problems, but the solutions,” he said.

University Tandon School of Engineering.

After earning his doctorate, Dr. Horodniceanu joined some colleagues from Tandon at Urbitran, an engineering, architectural and planning company, and he worked there full time in the 1980s. He also taught at Tandon and at Manhattan College in the Bronx.

In 1986, Mayor Edward I. Koch appointed Dr. Horodniceanu traffic commissioner. In that position, he oversaw the city’s traffic enforcement agents and its parking meters.

After David N. Dinkins became

mayor in 1990, Dr. Horodniceanu returned to Urbitran, where he served as chairman and chief executive. In 2008 AECOM, an infrastructure consulting firm, bought Urbitran, and Dr. Horodniceanu left the company to work for the transportation authority.

After leaving the M.T.A., Dr. Horodniceanu returned to Tandon, where he became a professor of civil and urban engineering and the inaugural chair of the Institute of Design and Construction Innovation Hub, which seeks to facilitate communication among different professions to make building

projects faster, more cost efficient and more sustainable.

In addition to his son Oded, he is survived by his wife; another son, Eran; a grandson; and three granddaughters. He lived in Forest Hills.

Before it finished its work on the Second Avenue subway line in 2011, one of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s tunnel-boring machines, the behemoths that eat through miles of Manhattan schist and other rock, was named Adi, after Dr. Horodniceanu’s only grandchild at the time.



CHRISTOPHER GREGORY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Dr. Horodniceanu with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2013 on the inaugural ride of the 7 train extension, which opened in 2015.

Deaths	Deaths	Deaths
Bernstein, Shirley Crown, James	Nahon, Nancy Tobey, Robert Weicker, Lowell	valuable, trusted partner to our business and a devoted mentor to our family. We extend our deepest condolences to Jim's wife, Paula; their children Torie, Hayley, W. Andrew, and Summer; their grandchildren Jackson and Lucas, his parents Renee and Lester; his brothers Steve and Daniel; his sisters Patricia, Susan, Sara, and Janet, and the entire Crown family.
<b>BERNSTEIN—Shirley,</b> mother, grandmother, great grandmother, teacher, and activist, passed away on June 27 at her home in Port Washington at the age of 95. The funeral will be held on July 2 at 11 a.m. at Guttman's in Woodbury, N.Y. Predeceased by her husband David (Dudi). She is survived by her three children and their spouses, seven grandchildren and their spouses, and four great grandchildren. The family requests that donations be made to Camp Kinderland or Nossou AHRC in her memory.	<b>NAHON—Nancy E.,</b> died peacefully at home on June 29. Mother, aunt, artist, teacher, friend, Nancy is now with Roz and Joan, wherever they are, in laughter and love.	<b>WEICKER—Lowell.</b> Medallion Financial mourns the loss of our former esteemed board member, former United States Senator and Governor Lowell Weicker, who also served proudly alongside former board members Governor Mario Cuomo and Presidential Medal of Honor recipient Henry Aaron for many years. He will be greatly missed. Alvin & Andrew Murstein
<b>CROWN—James.</b> The Szever family is deeply saddened by the devastating loss of our dear friend James Crown. Jim was a globally respected leader throughout the business, philanthropic and civic communities. With his characteristic humility and understated manner, he helped lead boardrooms ranging from JP Morgan and General Dynamics to the University of Chicago and the Aspen Institute. His beloved hometown of Chicago and countless institutions benefited enormously from his generous support and unrelenting advocacy. Jim was an in	<b>TOBEY—Robert,</b> on June 27, 2023, 15 years of lousy football, five Super Bowls, four championships, three cats, two grandkids, one wife, one kid, one life well lived. Go Giants.	<b>In Memoriam</b>
ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN NYC TO 212-556-9900 OR OUTSIDE NYC TOLL FREE 1-800-458-4522 OR SENT BY EMAIL TO NYTIMES@CLASSIFIEDSPU.S.COM FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS TUE., 4:00 PM the day before for Tuesday through Saturday editions until 4:00 PM on Friday for Sunday's national edition, until 12:45 PM Saturday for Sunday's New York and late national editions, until 2:00 PM Sunday for Monday's editions. Photos must be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.		<b>BOOKSTAVER—Douglas.</b> (7/1/60-7/23/92) "It's the laughter we will remember whenever we remember the way we were." Morn, Bobbi, Julie, Michelle, and Lauren
		<b>PILCH—Todd David.</b> 7/1/61-7/15/99. Happy Birthday in Heaven. It has been 24 years. I will never stop thinking about you and wondering if you are okay - that's what big sisters are for. Finally a granddaughter and 40 years of marriage. I miss sharing these milestones with you. With all my love, Sue





LEO FRIEDMAN

From left: Mr. Arkin with castmates Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson and the director Mike Nichols preparing for the show “Luv.”



UNITED ARTISTS VIA PHOTOEST

He was nominated for an Academy Award for his first feature film, “The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming.”



ERIC LEE/FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

In “Little Miss Sunshine” (2006) with Abigail Breslin, he was a crusty and heroin-habituated grandfather and won an Oscar.

# Alan Arkin, 89, Comic Actor Who Also Had a Flair for Drama, Dies

By ROBERT BERKVIST and PETER KEEPNEWS

Alan Arkin, who won a Tony Award for his first lead role on Broadway, received an Academy Award nomination for his first feature film, and went on to have a long and diverse career as a character actor who specialized in comedy but was equally adept at drama, died on Thursday in San Marcos, Calif. He was 89.

His son Matthew Arkin said that Mr. Arkin, who had heart ailments, died at home.

Mr. Arkin was not quite a show-business neophyte when he was cast in the 1963 Broadway comedy “Enter Laughing,” Joseph Stein’s adaptation of Carl Reiner’s semi-autobiographical novel about a stage-struck boy from the Bronx. He had toured and recorded with the Tarriers, a folk music group, and he had appeared on Broadway with the Second City, the celebrated improvisational comedy troupe. But he was still a relative unknown.

He did not stay unknown for long.

In a cast that included established professionals like Sylvia

*He became known for playing likably hapless Everyman characters.*

Sidney and Vivian Blaine, Mr. Arkin stole the show and won the hearts of the critics. “‘Enter Laughing’ is marvelously funny, and so is Alan Arkin in the principal role,” Howard Taubman wrote in The New York Times.

Mr. Arkin won a Tony. The show ran for a year and made him a star.

Reviewers were again enthusiastic, and Mr. Arkin again found himself in a hit show, when he returned to Broadway in 1964 as a woebegone misfit in Murray Schisgal’s absurdist farce “Luv,” staged by Mike Nichols and co-starring Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson. With two Broadway triumphs under his belt, it was a confident Mr. Arkin who moved from the stage to the screen in 1966.

“I never had any doubts about making it in movies,” he told The Daily News a year later. “I just knew I had to, because there was no alternative.”

His confidence proved justified. He was nominated for an Oscar for his first feature film, “The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming,” an offbeat comedy about the hysteria that ensues when a Russian submarine runs aground on an island in Massachusetts. As the frantic leader of a landing party sent ashore to find a way to refloat the vessel, he earned a place in cinema history

Robert Berkvist, a former New York Times arts editor, died in January. Shivani Gonzalez contributed reporting.

with a riotous scene in which he teaches his non-English-speaking crew to say “Emergency! Everybody to get from street!”

That led to a series of roles that established him as a man of a thousand accents, or close to it. He played a French detective in “Inspector Clouseau” (1968), putting his own spin on a role created (and subsequently reclaimed) by Peter Sellers; a Puerto Rican widower in “Popi” (1969); a Lithuanian sailor in the television movie “The Defection of Simas Kudirka” (1978); and many other nationalities and ethnicities.

“I could play any kind of foreigner,” he told The Times in 1970. “But I can’t play any kind of native of anywhere.”

But he soon became even better known for playing likably hapless Everyman characters. The ultimate Arkin Everyman was Captain Yossarian in “Catch-22” (1970), Mike Nichols’s film version of Joseph Heller’s celebrated World War II novel.

“Catch-22” received mixed reviews and was a disappointment at the box office, but Mr. Arkin’s performance as Yossarian, a panicky bombardier constantly looking for ways to avoid combat, was widely praised. In his Times review, Vincent Canby said of Mr. Arkin that “because he projects intelligence with such monomaniacal intensity, he is both funny and heroic at the same time.”

By that time Mr. Arkin had also successfully ventured outside the realm of comedy, establishing a lifelong pattern. In “Wait Until Dark” (1967), a suspense drama starring Audrey Hepburn as a blind woman who is terrorized by drug dealers looking for a secret stash of heroin, he was convincingly evil as the dealer in chief.

In “The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter” (1968), based on the novel by Carson McCullers, he played a deaf man drawn to help the disadvantaged in a racially divided Southern town. That performance earned him his second Oscar nomination.

It would be almost 40 years before his third nomination, and his only Oscar, for his portrayal of a crusty and heroin-habituated grandfather in the indie comedy “Little Miss Sunshine” (2006). His fourth and final nomination was for his role as a cynical movie producer in “Argo” (2012), Ben Affleck’s based-on-a-true-story account of the made-in-Hollywood rescue of hostages in Iran.

The years between nominations were busy ones.

Alan Wolf Arkin was born on March 26, 1934, in Brooklyn to David Arkin, a painter and writer, and Beatrice (Wortis) Arkin, a teacher whom he later remembered as “a tough old Depression-style lefty.” The family later moved to Los Angeles, where his father lost his job as a school teacher when he refused to answer questions about his political beliefs.

Mr. Arkin studied acting at Los Angeles City College and later at



FRED R. CONRAD/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Alan Arkin in 2006. An occasional author, he wrote several children’s books and two memoirs.

Bennington College in Vermont, which was a women’s school at the time but accepted a few male theater students.

His first professional experience, however, was not as an actor but as a singer and guitarist with the Tarriers, a folk group that had hits with “The Banana Boat Song” and other records.

“I thought it was going to be an entree into an acting career, like the naive young man that I was,” Mr. Arkin said in 2020 when he and his son Adam were guests on “Gilbert Gottfried’s Amazing Colossal Podcast.” “It didn’t, so I quit them after two years.”

His first notable work as an actor was with the Second City in Chicago, which he joined in 1960. “I took the Second City job because I was failing in New York,” he told The Times in 1986. “I couldn’t get arrested. When I got there I wasn’t funny at all. But slowly I built one character, then another, and the audience helped teach me what was funny and what didn’t work.”

He made his Broadway debut in

1961 in the company’s revue “From the Second City.” From there, it was a short step to “Enter Laughing.”

It was also a relatively short step from acting to directing. In 1966 he directed the Off Broadway play “Eh?” which featured a young Dustin Hoffman. In 1969 he directed a successful Off Broadway revival of Jules Feiffer’s dark comedy “Little Murders.”

He also directed the 1971 movie version, which starred Elliott Gould and in which Mr. Arkin played a small role. It was one of only two feature films he directed. Neither “Little Murders” nor “Fire Sale,” released in 1977, was a hit.

By far the most successful of his dozen or so stage directing credits was the original Broadway production of the Neil Simon comedy “The Sunshine Boys” (1972), which starred Jack Albertson and Sam Levene as two feuding ex-vaudevillians reunited against their will, and for which he received a Tony nomination.

Mr. Arkin told The Times in

1986, when he was staging an Off Broadway revival of the 1937 farce “Room Service,” that he much preferred directing for the stage to acting on it.

“I’m always grateful that I don’t have to do it,” he said. “I haven’t been onstage for 20 years, and there have been maybe 15 minutes when I wanted to go back.”

But he continued to stay busy in the movies. His memorable roles in the 1970s included a sympathetic Sigmund Freud coping with the drug-addicted Sherlock Holmes (Nicol Williamson) in “The Seven-Per-Cent Solution” (1976), and a mild-mannered dentist — another quintessential Arkin Everyman — dragged into an insane adventure by a mysterious character (Peter Falk) who may or may not be a C.I.A. agent in “The In-Laws” (1979).

Among his later film roles were a worn-out real estate salesman in the film version of David Mamet’s play “Glengarry Glen Ross” (1992), a psychiatrist treating a professional hit man (John Cusack) in “Grosse Pointe Blank”

(1997) and an overprotective father in “Slums of Beverly Hills” (1998). But from the 1980s on, much of his best work was done on television.

“There was a period of a year or two when I wasn’t getting many good offers,” he said in 1986. “And a television show came along that I thought was exceptional, and within two weeks there was another one.” He added, “Although I’m more impressed by movies, I find I’m more moved by television.”

In addition to numerous made-for-TV movies, Mr. Arkin’s small-screen roles included the title character, a scheming hospital administrator, on the short-lived sitcom “Harry” (1987); a judge on the cable drama “100 Centre Street” in 2001 and 2002; Grace’s father in a 2005 episode of “Will & Grace”; and, most recently, the cranky agent and best friend of an aging acting coach (Michael Douglas) on the first two seasons of the critically praised Netflix comedy “The Kominsky Method,” for which he received Emmy and Golden Globe nominations in 2019 and 2020.

He was nominated for six Emmys in his career, including for his performances in two TV movies based on real events, “Escape From Sobibor” (1987) and “The Pentagon Papers” (2003), although he never won.

In 1998 he returned to the stage for the first time in more than 30 years, to good reviews, when he teamed with Elaine May for “Power Plays,” an Off Broadway program of three one-acts. In addition to directing all three and writing one of them (the other two were written by Ms. May), he appeared in two: his own “Virtual Reality,” the surreal story of two men awaiting the delivery of a mysterious shipment, with his son Anthony Arkin; and Ms. May’s “In and Out of the Light,” in which he played a lecherous dentist alongside Anthony, Ms. May and her daughter, Jeannie Berlin.

Mr. Arkin’s first two marriages, to Jeremy Yaffe and the actress Barbara Dana, ended in divorce. In addition to his sons, Matthew, Adam and Anthony, he is survived by his wife, Suzanne Newlander Arkin, and four grandchildren.

Mr. Arkin was also an occasional author. He wrote several children’s books, among them “The Lemming Condition” (1976) and “Cassie Loves Beethoven” (2000). In 2011 he published a memoir, “An Improvised Life”; he followed that in 2020 with “Out of My Mind,” a brief history of his search for meaning in the universe and his embrace of Eastern philosophy.

Toward the end of “An Improvised Life,” Mr. Arkin reflected on his chosen profession. Noting that a lot of actors “are better at pretending to be other people than they are at being themselves,” he wrote, “When things get tense, when I start taking my work a bit too seriously, I remind myself that I’m only pretending to be a human being.”

# Christine King Farris, 95, Sister of Martin Luther King Jr. and Promoter of His Legacy

By ALEX TRAUB

Christine King Farris, the last living sibling of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., died on Thursday. She was 95.

Her death was announced by her niece, the Rev. Bernice King, in a statement. The statement did not say where she died.

Ms. Farris, Dr. King’s older sister, supported him politically and personally. She joined him in 1965 for the March for Voting Rights in Alabama and in 1966 for the March Against Fear in Mississippi. She also lent him money so he could buy his engagement ring.

She lived through multiple tragedies over the next few years: the assassination of Dr. King in 1968; the death, by drowning, of her other brother, Alfred Daniel King, known as A.D., in his swimming pool in 1969; and the assassination of her mother, Alberta King, during a church service in 1974.

“I think of the things that I’ve faced in my life, and sometimes I question how I’m still here,” Ms. Farris told CNN in 2008. “I’m the



FROM LEFT: BOB FITCH PHOTOGRAPHY ARCHIVE; DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES; DAVID GOLDMAN ASSOCIATED PRESS

Christine King Farris, right, with her sister-in-law Coretta Scott King, left, and her mother, Alberta King, in 1968 at the funeral for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ms. Farris, in 2015, speaking at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, where Dr. King had preached.

lone survivor in my family.”

Ms. Farris dedicated herself to promoting Dr. King’s legacy. She helped Coretta Scott King, her sister-in-law, establish the King Center, a nonprofit organization that conducts educational programs and supports research related to Dr. King, and she served as its senior vice president and treasurer.

She made herself available on both mundane and dramatic occasions to honor her family. She helped pick authentic wallpaper for a museum based in the home where she and her siblings grew up. In 2007, the year after Coretta Scott King died, Ms. Farris took her place conducting a commemorative service at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta on Dr. King’s

birthday.

This January, she was in the pews when President Biden spoke in honor of her brother.

Willie Christine King was born on Sept. 11, 1927, in Atlanta. She was the eldest child of the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr. and Alberta Christine Williams King; Martin was born in 1929, and A.D.

was born the next year.

In 1948 she graduated from Spelman College, as her mother and grandmother had, and she later earned two master’s degrees in education from Columbia University — one in the social foundations of education in 1950 and one in special education in 1958. She later returned to Spelman, where she worked as an associate pro-



*A ‘lone survivor’ who honored her family at events big and small.*

fessor of education and the director of a learning resources center for about 50 years. She was often described as the college’s longest-serving faculty member.

In 1960, she married Isaac Newton Farris. The couple had two children, Angela Christine Farris Watkins and Isaac Newton Farris Jr. A list of Ms. Farris’s survivors was not immediately available.

Ms. Farris wrote two children’s books about her brother and, in 2009, a memoir, “Through It All: Reflections on My Life, My Family, and My Faith.” She made it her goal to describe what Dr. King was like not as a great man of history, but as a brother.

“They think he simply happened, that he appeared fully formed, without context, ready to change the world,” she wrote in her memoir. “Take it from his big sister, that’s simply not the case.”

The Associated Press contributed reporting.



2 THEATER  
Exploring America, along with an audience. BY ALEXIS SOLOSKI

3 COMEDY  
A stand-up show blurs boundaries. BY JASON ZINOMAN



7 TRAVEL  
Malta prepares to host EuroPride in September.  
BY ALEXANDER LOBRANO



# When Motown's Glamour Wore Off

The 'tragedy' of Cindy Birdsong in her post-Supreme years was an open secret. Now it's public.

By JULIA JACOBS and CHRISTOPHER PETKANAS

For nearly a decade, Cindy Birdsong reigned as a member of the Supremes. Never as well-known as Diana Ross, Mary Wilson or even Florence Ballard — the singer she replaced in 1967 — she was, nonetheless, Motown royalty, whether onstage with the Temptations or at the funeral of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

But Birdsong's life changed dramatically after she left the group in 1976. Her finances fell apart and she eventually sold off the trappings of celebrity life, took an office job and largely withdrew from the limelight, resurfacing only occasionally at Motown events.

Much about Birdsong's situation remained largely hidden from view, close friends and family say, because of her isolated life inside a Los Angeles apartment she shared with Rochelle Lander, a longtime friend with whom she started a Christian ministry.

Now the depths of Birdsong's financial and medical struggles have become public as her family has gone to court to request a legal conservatorship to govern her affairs. They say the singer, 83, is totally incapacitated after suffering several strokes and had to be rescued from Lander, a person they say began exerting undue influence over Birdsong's care and finances, isolating her from friends and family even as her health worsened.

"She was keeping us in the blind," said Ronald Birdsong, the former Supreme's brother. He asked a Los Angeles Superior Court judge in May to appoint him as one of two conservators for his sister.

Lander has argued that for many years she was the only person willing to help Birdsong, a contention the family denies.

The dispute escalated in 2021 when the Los Angeles police, at the urging of Birdsong's family, removed the singer from the apartment, citing her deteriorating condition. She is now in a skilled nursing facility.

The removal was put in motion by Brad Herman, a representative of the family who has been asked to serve as a co-conservator

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At left, the Motown group the Supremes performing in 1968 with Cindy Birdsong on the left. Above, Birdsong in 2004.

# It's Easy to Reach a Verdict on What Is Bad Television

Breaking down the baffling missteps and occasional bright spots of the HBO pop fable 'The Idol,' which concludes its season on Sunday.

CREATED BY SAM LEVINSON and Abel Tesfaye (a.k.a. the Weeknd), "The Idol" arrived five weeks ago on HBO amid mostly negative buzz and ends Sunday. (A second season has not been announced.) Ahead of the season finale, three New York Times critics — James Poniewozik, chief TV critic; Wesley Morris, critic at large; and Lindsay Zoladz, pop music critic — compared notes on the story of the unstable pop star Jocelyn (Lily-Rose Depp), the grumpy Svengali Tedros (Tesfaye), and their various handlers and hangers-on.

**JAMES PONIEWOZIK** A confession: I was ready for "The Idol" to be good. Yeah, I saw the reports about the catastrophic production. But there's a history of HBO series that followed big hits and were trashed because they were trying different, ambitious

things. (I will defend "Tell Me You Love Me" and "John From Cincinnati" until death.)

But indeed "The Idol" is bad. Impressively so! In this era of smoothed-out TV mediocrity, you need pull to make a show this bad. You need big names who have, to quote Tedros, "cart-ay blan-shay." "The Idol" is gross and leering in the way the set reports suggested, but it's also inept in a way that Sam Levinson's "Euphoria" would not suggest. The tone lurches erratically. Motivations are inexplicable. It features the least mesmerizing cult leader in screen history. Characters and story lines seem to exist only to express the makers' gripes about the music industry or intimacy coordinators, like a porny, torture-y "The Newsroom."

I am open to arguments to the contrary, though! Or, at least, is "The Idol" saying anything about celebrity or pop music that's worth a closer listen?

**WESLEY MORRIS** I'm with you, Jim. Through four episodes, it's a baffler. I think it suffers

CONTINUED ON PAGE C6



Lily-Rose Depp and Abel Tesfaye anchor "The Idol," for better and worse.

EDDY CHEN/HBO



# Playwrights Put America Onstage, Warts and All

‘The Democracy Project’ tells the story of Federal Hall and major historical events there.

By ALEXIS SOLOSKI

Tourists who pause outside Federal Hall, a Wall Street memorial maintained by the U.S. National Park Service, will find its neoclassical facade covered in scaffolding. Its front steps, which host a bronze statue of George Washington, are occluded, too. But until July 22, the man himself can be found inside, fussing over his dentures, his sleep and his coming inauguration.

“Oh, hon,” his wife, Martha, says. “Don’t lead with your anxieties.”

George (Tom Nelis) and Martha (Erin Anderson) are characters in “The Democracy Project,” a collaboration among five playwrights and two directors with a song composed by Michael R. Jackson. Commissioned by Federal Hall, the 45-minute site-specific performance, offered free of charge in the hall’s grand Greek Revival rotunda, is both a pageant-style survey of significant events at the site and an informed critique. Yes, George and Martha are here, but so too are Billy Lee (Nathan Hinton), an enslaved man owned by Washington, and Ona Judge, an enslaved woman owned by his wife, as well as Alexander McGillivray, the Creek chief who signed the Treaty of New York, a short-lived agreement of “peace and friendship,” as its text claims, between the Indige-



ABOVE AND BELOW: ANAKRACH/GETTY IMAGES



**A creative process was organized to involve haggling and concessions.**

Top, from left, Tom Nelis, Jake Hart and Tatiana Williams in “The Democracy Project,” at Federal Hall in Manhattan. Left, from far left, Nathan Hinton, Hart and Nelis in another scene from the show.

nous people and the fledgling nation. “We try to get as much information and complexity into it as we can,” one of the contributing playwrights, Lisa D’Amour, said of the show in a recent interview.

The project began when Marie Salerno, Federal Hall’s chief executive, and Lynn Goldner, a producer, were strategizing on

how to raise the memorial’s profile ahead of the nation’s 250th anniversary in 2026. Where Federal Hall stands (the original hall was demolished in 1812) was the site of Washington’s inauguration and the first Capitol building. Few besides history buffs — and “Hamilton” viewers — now recall this. “We needed to tell this story,” Salerno said.

In 2017, she and Goldner reached out to the playwright Bruce Norris. He suggested bringing in other writers, and Tanya Barfield, D’Amour, Larissa FastHorse and Melissa James Gibson all joined Norris, each of them intrigued by the idea of a site-specific installation inside a national memorial.

## What It’s Like to Inhabit The Role of Putin in ‘Patriots’

‘It’s been fascinating how the perception of him and the play keep changing,’ Will Keen says.

By ALEX MARSHALL

On a recent evening, the British actor Will Keen was onstage at the Noel Coward Theater in London playing one of the world’s most divisive men: President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

For much of the first half of “Patriots,” which is largely set in the 1990s after the Soviet Union’s collapse, Keen portrays the character sympathetically — as a minor politician who could only afford cheap suits and whose success was dependent on a friend’s largess. Later on, when an adviser suggests Putin, now president, should keep his enemies close, Keen’s portrayal becomes chilling. “Why would I want to do that,” he replies, “when I can simply destroy them?”

Written by Peter Morgan, the creator of “The Crown,” “Patriots” stars Tom Hollander as Boris Berezovsky, a real-life oligarch who made a fortune in post-Soviet Russia, only to fall out with Putin and end up exiled in London, where he died under mysterious circumstances, in 2013.

Despite that focus, it’s Keen’s performance that has grabbed attention since the play debuted at the Almeida Theater, in London, last June. Arifa Akbar, in The Guardian, said that even when Putin “grows more megalomaniacal, Keen avoids caricature and keeps his character’s self-righteous desire for Russian imperialism convincingly real, and chilling.” Matt Wolf, reviewing that production for The New York Times, said that Keen “astounds throughout.” In April, Keen won the best supporting actor award at the Olivier Awards, Britain’s equivalent of the Tonys.

In a recent interview at the Noel Coward theater, where “Patriots” is running through Aug. 19, Keen said that, although the script was written long before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the war had changed the feel of the play, making it seem as much Putin’s “origin story” as the tale of an oligarch’s demise.

Keen, 53, said that his performance made some audiences uneasy, but that it

was “nice to be in a show that’s asking questions, rather than providing answers.”

In an interview, Keen discussed what he’d learned by getting inside Putin’s head. The following are edited excerpts from that conversation.

**Why did you want to play such a figure?**

Well, I first learned about it in 2021 — so before the invasion. It didn’t feel as present as it does now. He felt like an autocratic and terrifying figure, obviously, but he didn’t feel like an autocratic and terrifying figure who was also impinging on the world’s safety. It’s been fascinating how the perception of him and the play keep changing.

**You’re often played villains or antiheroes, including Macbeth and Father MacPhail in “His Dark Materials.” Do you worry about being typecast?**

As a citizen, I might look at these people as villains, but as an actor, I can’t do that. I want to be as sympathetic as possible to the character — or as empathetic, at least. Putin is a baddie, but I don’t want to be playing him as a pantomime.

I’m really interested by our perception of autocrats. From our side, it’s an image of immorality. But in order to do the things that he’s done, he must have an incredibly intense sensation of his own morality — an idea of justice, an idea that he’s setting wrongs right.

**Some political commentators say Putin is motivated by a desire to restore the Soviet Union. Is that what you mean by setting wrongs right?**

I’m not in any position to comment politically, but my sense of the character is of somebody who has a particularly deeply sensitized attitude to betrayal. It’s a bit like the medieval idea of kingship, where the king becomes the country in some way: There’s this sense in which Russia — the land — is his body and there’s an absolutely personal, almost physical betrayal, in the breakup of the union.

What Peter Morgan does so brilliantly in the play is show how Putin’s personal friendships, and the betrayals he experiences in them, impinge on the political sphere too.



MARC BRENNER

Will Keen portraying President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia in Peter Morgan’s “Patriots,” at the Noel Coward Theater, in the West End of London.

**Critics have praised you for mimicking Putin physically, as much as the emotion of the performance. How did you prepare for this?**

Well, I read and read and read and watched and watched and watched.

Physically, what was most useful to me was just observing him in press conferences — I got this enormous sense of inner turmoil, covered by an incredible physical stillness. There’s a sense of containment to him, like he’s trying to hold everything inside.

A lot of people have noticed that stillness, especially of the right hand not mov-

ing in his walk. And there are other ex-K.G.B. people who have the same thing. The K.G.B. also talk about channeling your tension into your foot. And you do observe his right foot moving very slowly in interviews under the table. Onstage, I also find that tension in him coming out in my fingers.

**As the invasion unfurled, did you change anything in your portrayal?**

Of course you think about the conflict, but we didn’t discuss, “Let’s make him more chilling” or anything like that. The way the play’s written, it’d be chilling whenever it was performed.

I think it’s actually dangerous to think about the effect you’ll have on audience. All you can think about really is, “Is it true?”

**This isn’t the only recent play in London featuring Putin. In 2019, Lucy Prebble had a hit with “A Very Expensive Poison” about his involvement in the murder of Alexander Litvinenko, a spy-turned-whistle-blower. Why do you think Putin is becoming a staple of British theater?**

Well, I don’t know whether he’s becoming a staple. But it does seem that what has happened in Russia lends itself to extremely interesting plays — this ideological battle that’s going on with incredibly high stakes. And theater since time immemorial has studied autocrats, and strong and violent authority is a productive, dramatic force against which to set any kind of dissident opinion.

All the characters that one has played sort of talk to each other, at some level, but I would compare Putin to Macbeth, of course. They’re obvious autocrats, but for Macbeth the great motivator is fear, whereas, here, I’d say it’s perceived injustice. The result in both cases is a sort of very performed manliness.

**What have audience reactions been like?**

Absolutely wonderful, although sometimes it does seem people don’t know what to do at the end: Should we clap? A lot of Russians have said they feel like he’s in the room, which is incredibly encouraging.

I don’t think I’ve spoken to any Ukrainians about it. I’ve had boos, definitely, at the end. But I don’t know whether that was a Ukrainian boo or a British boo. There’s a kind of international language of booing.

**Has the role affected you personally?**

No, I wash him off at the end of the show. But it is a bleak place to inhabit — not because of a sense of guilt, it’s the agony of being someone who is obsessed by betrayal and vengeance.



JASON ZINOMAN | ON COMEDY



John Early in “Now More Than Ever,” a dizzying, hourlong show on Max crammed with coarse jokes, goofy comic scenes and some sweaty singing and dancing.

# Giving Stand-Up the Old Razzle-Dazzle

John Early’s deliriously over-the-top sensibility is on full display in his new musical comedy special.

You’ll laugh, you’ll cringe, and maybe even shake your booty.

JOHN EARLY’S BOUNDARY-BLURRING new Max special, “Now More Than Ever,” has the perfect title. The hyperbole, salesmanship and euphony of the expression match his literate satirical persona. And it also hints at the main asset and flaw of his hour: the too-muchness of it all.

Early is a triple threat in the old-school sense (singing, dancing, acting) as well as in the comedy one (stand-up, sketch, improv). And by improv, I don’t mean the Second City variety so much as the art of vamping, which he jokes is the one thing members of his generation, millennials, were taught to do. Perhaps. But anyone who has seen Early glamorously filibuster (a paradoxical phrase that also suits him) while hosting a live show knows this can be as entertaining as anything.

While he might be best known for his

scene-stealing flourishes on the series “Search Party” or his long-running double act with Kate Berlant, Early, whose influence can be seen on a whole generation of comedians, shows off a little bit of everything he does here. Using the frame of a behind-the-scenes pop music documentary (Think “Madonna: Truth or Dare”), he mixes goofy comic scenes in which he plays the vain, jerky star with observational stand-up and sultry cover songs.

Unlike comics whose music punches up a joke, Early commits to his songs, using a lovely falsetto and pumping bass line in strutting performances of work by everyone from Britney Spears to Neil Young. It’s unusual for a special to toggle between cringe-comedy punchlines and triumphant cabaret exhilaration. And it’s a tricky mix, because the music slows the comedy, and the jokes don’t necessarily complement the music. Early likes being elusive, conflating sincerity and parody, while Ping-Ponging between broad subjects (Donald

J. Trump, Silicon Valley) and rarefied references. (He’s the first comic to ever make me cackle at the word “plosive.”)

He has more than enough charisma to fit together this jigsaw puzzle of a show. It’s coherent if not easy to access. The key to his persona, I think, can be found in the joke he tells about the always-be-selling vanity of his generation, presenting himself as its avatar. “Here’s what it boils down to,” he says. “I don’t know how to do my taxes, but I do know how to be a badass.” Then he clarifies, “A shell of a badass.”

That’s the role Early plays here. In black leather pants, he dances across the stage, flirting with the crowd with as much ingratiation as the camera fawningly displays toward him. This shell is fun to look at, in part because it’s full of cracks. And you don’t just see it when he introduces his parents in the crowd and reverts to a bratty, insecure kid, or when he does a very funny take on the “Access Hollywood” tape that compares Trump to Early as a closeted 12-

year-old in the locker room trying to convince his friends he likes a girl. “If we’re honest,” he says, “Donald Trump is not a sensual person.” It’s the way he says “If we’re honest” that cracks me up.

One of the many reasons Early is so hard to pin down is that while he leans on swagger and gusto, his most distinguishing moments mix in another register, his bookish alertness to language. My favorite bit is an inspired mountain-out-of-a-molehill joke about how Apple manipulates you into giving up personal data by offering these choices when you try to download an app: “Allow,” a word he describes as “pillowy,” or “Ask App Not to Track,” which he terms “the single most suicidal sequence of monosyllabic sounds.” There’s no way I can do this justice in text, but it’s essentially five minutes of close-read literary criticism that ends in tears and hysteria. If, like me, that’s your kind of thing, you’re in luck.

There’s also a strain of comedy here that lampoons the virtue-signaling language of the overly online. Early taps the microphone: “Check, check. You guys can hear me, right?” he asks before adding: “I just want to make sure this is amplifying queer voices.”

While Early defines himself as the quintessential millennial, he has the Generation X obsession with a romanticized version of the culture of the 1970s. The grainy film stock and chunky red font of this special remind me of a Tarantino movie. In one revealing nostalgic riff, Early yearns for the days of Bob Fosse, when louche choreographers were on talk shows and dance could be “kinky and mysterious.”

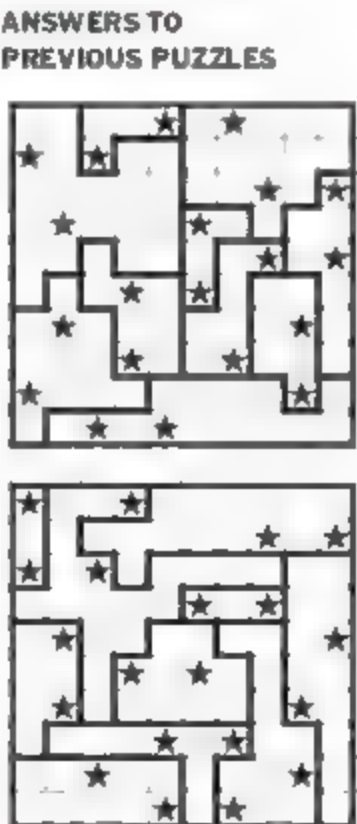
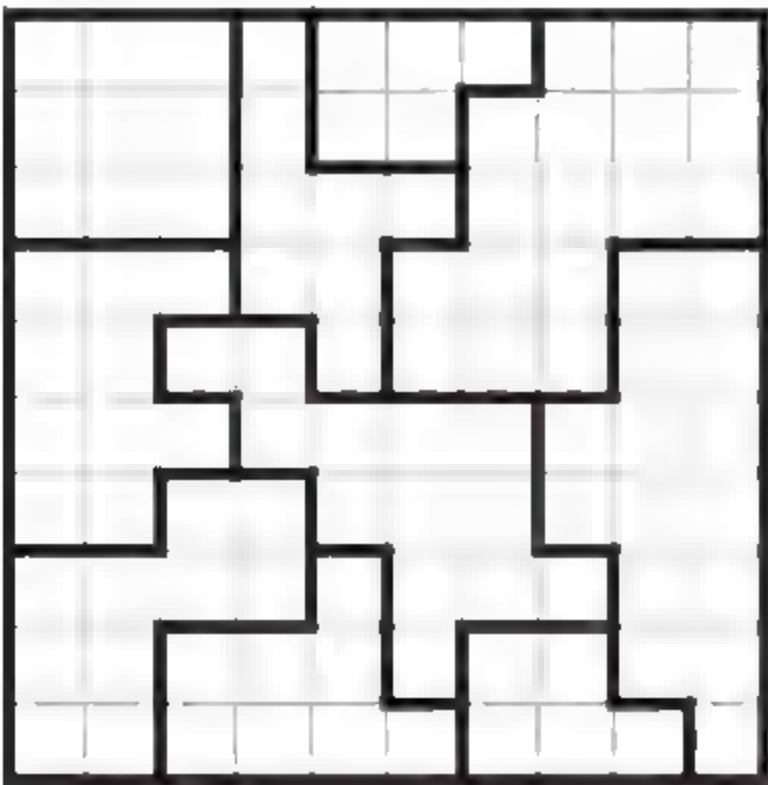
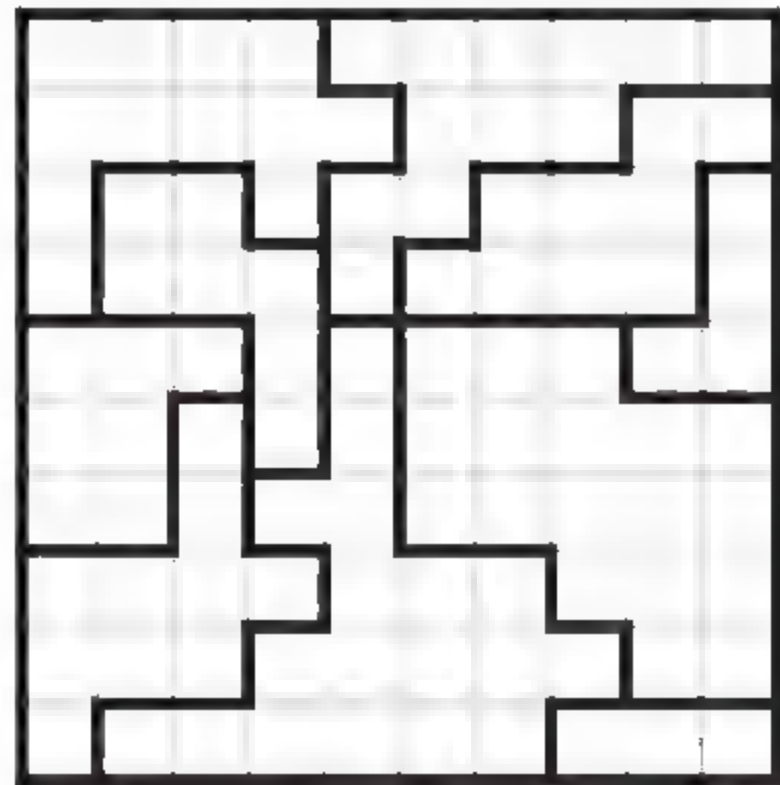
Fosse could also be both sexy and ridiculous. While I wish “Now More Than Ever” had a bit more precision and ruthlessness in its direction (by Emily Allan and Leah Hennessey), and there’s a visceral energy lost in the translation from live performance to film, at his best, Early evokes a gyrating, deliriously decadent razzle-dazzle.

Toward the end, Early invites his band members to teach him how to play instruments so he can flirt and sexually harass the band, which leads to a visit from the channel’s woman from Human Resources.

You get the sense that Early is annoyed by such bureaucratic scolds, but you would never find him responding to it with something as boring as complaining about cancel culture. Instead of defending himself, he flashes a guilty look and rushes into a final song. It’s a hypnotic, joyful performance of Donna Summer’s “I Feel Love.”

As the camera swirls and splashes of yellow light flare, Early, sweat glistening under a disco ball, loses himself in reverie. At the start of the special, titles on the screen instruct you to turn the volume up, and it’s good advice. You can’t recreate the feel of a New York dance party by watching a special at home, but why not try? This is comedy that wants you to get up and dance.

## Two Not Touch



Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.

## Wit Twister

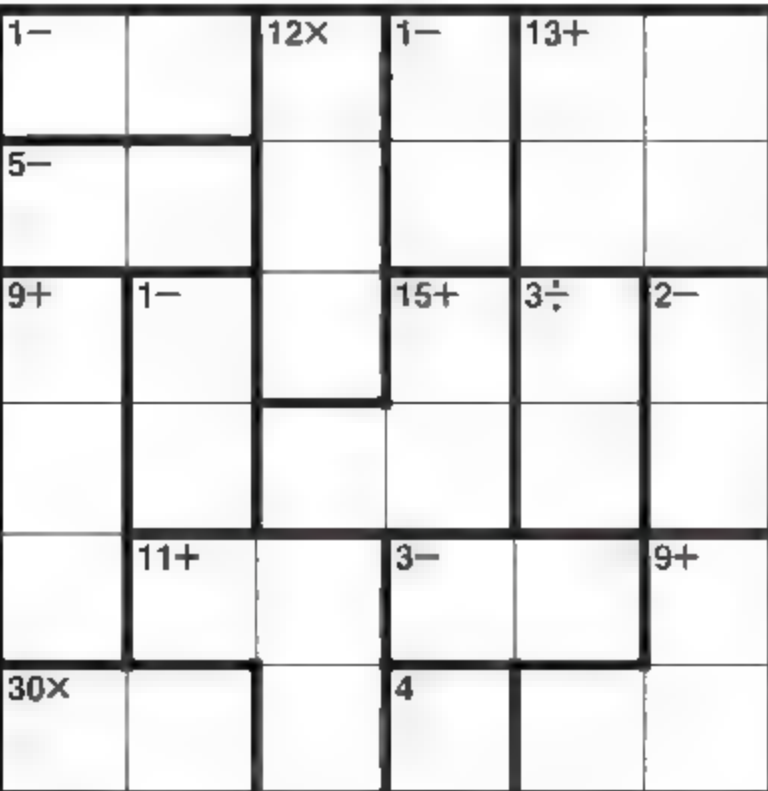
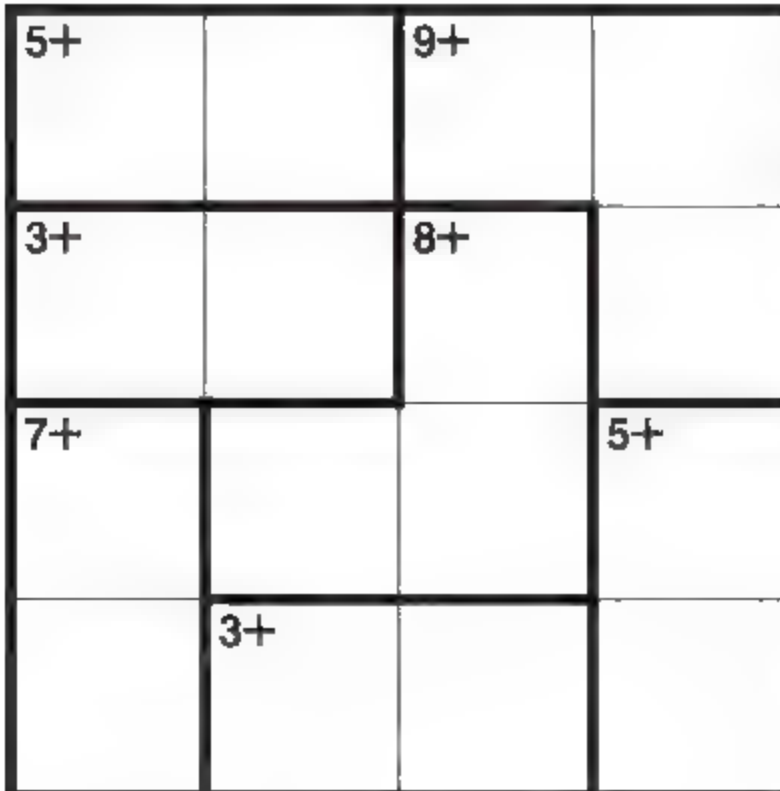
At concert halls around the globe I prank the string quartets  
By “borrowing” their instruments before the show begins.  
It takes me only \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ the violins,  
Which really wrecks the rondos and destroys the \_\_\_\_\_.

Complete the verse with words that are anagrams of each other. Each underline represents a letter.

PUZZLE BY STUART CLELAND

YESTERDAY’S ANSWER: Pacers, Packers

## KenKen



Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

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## Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz

### ACROSS

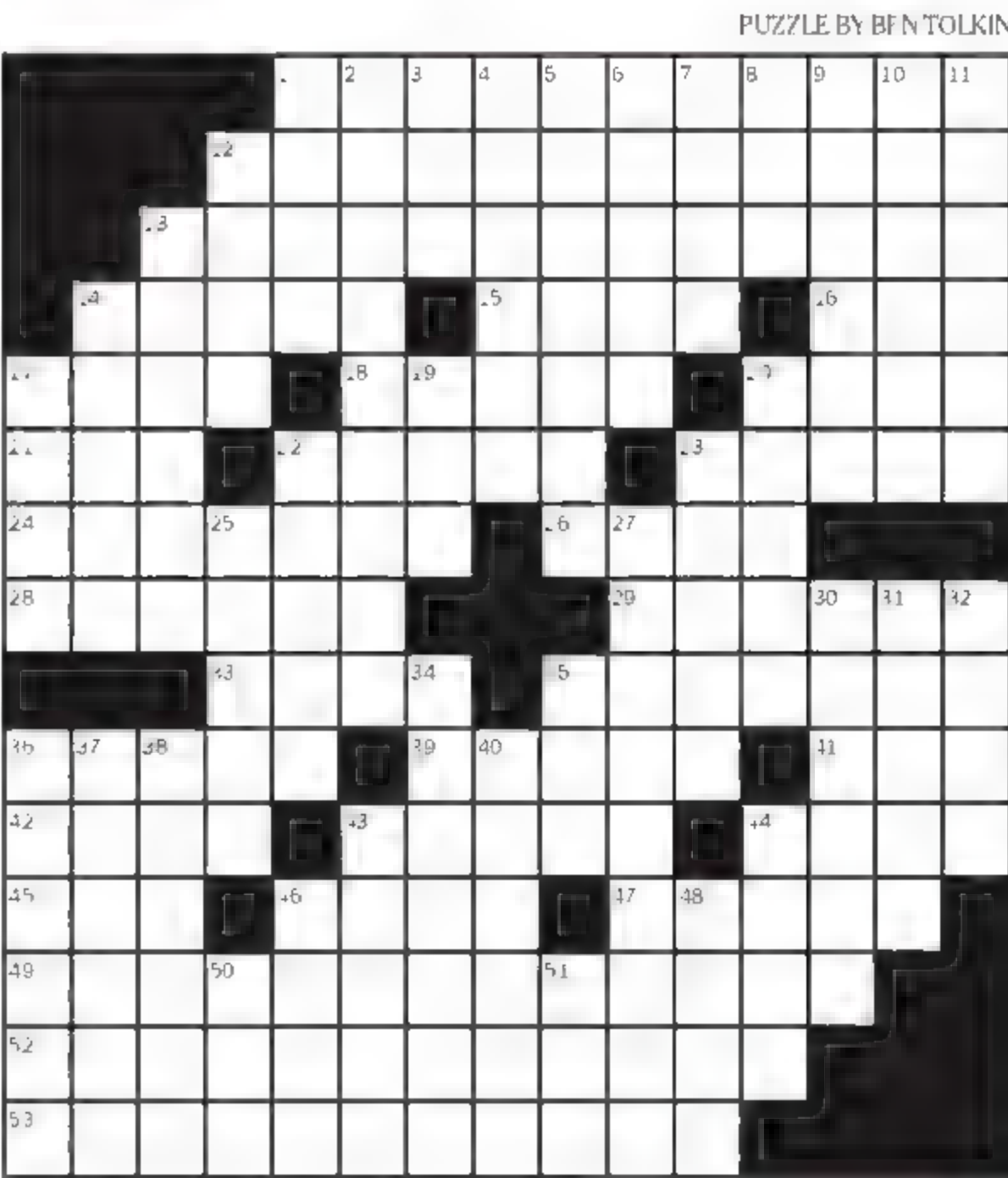
- “Well, that much was clear”
- Sequence of steps
- Present-day request?
- Don’t match
- Cheat
- Poet Scott-Heron
- God who is destined to slay the serpent Jormungandr
- “Beowulf” and “Gilgamesh,” for two
- Drain
- “You there!”
- “His \_\_\_\_\_ little mouth was drawn up like a bow” (line from “A Visit From St. Nicholas”)
- City planner, at times
- Forest giant
- Right on a map
- Disney villain inspired by the drag queen Divine
- Anxiety
- Mulligan

- Betray nervousness, in a way
- Shift, for one
- “High five!”
- \_\_\_\_ End (setting in “The Lord of the Rings”)
- Dutch scientist with an eponymous “cloud”
- Word with boot or spaghetti
- Mark’s replacement
- NewLeaf potato, e.g., in brief
- “Anything Goes” writer Porter
- “Skip me”
- Flinches, but only a little
- Study of riddles
- Absence excuser

### DOWN

- They’re offered seven times a year

### ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



7/1/23

- Classic Beat Generation roman à clef
- Rocks
- Popular pet originally from Mongolia
- A, for one
- Saw and punch
- Outer ear?
- GPS guess
- Celebrate, as a new year
- Total
- One holding all the cards
- First word in a 13-Across
- London-based insurance company
- Say “Yay!,” say
- Via, on signs
- Peeved, for short
- Ancestral emblem
- Dispenses, with “out”
- Sassy, letter-shaped gesture accompanying a retort
- German food that’s better than it sounds?
- “George,” in aviation slang
- Certain surprise party?
- Department store that once sold mail-order houses
- So
- Holes in the wall?
- Subway stop: Abbr.
- Certain creature comfort?
- Ray on one’s TV
- Like some N.S.F.W. content
- Hunt
- Bat signal
- What one star may represent
- Fatigues, familiarly
- Royal attendant
- Pepper, for one: Abbr.
- Chess ranking system named for a Hungarian physicist

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# When Motown's Glamour Wore Off

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

by Birdsong's relatives. Herman, an entertainment business manager whose high-profile celebrity clients have included Burt Reynolds and Pat Boone, has a power of attorney signed by Birdsong's three living siblings and a sister-in-law.

"It has been an open secret among the Motown family, the tragedy of Cindy," Herman said in an interview.

Lander considered but did not agree to an interview, and stopped responding to inquiries. During Birdsong's removal by the police, Lander defended her treatment of her friend, challenged the family's right to intervene and displayed her own power of attorney form that Birdsong had signed over a decade earlier, which she said gave her the right to direct the singer's medical and financial decision making.

"She had a complete mental break; no one would help her," Lander told the police, according to a video of the encounter that took place in the hallway outside Birdsong's apartment. "Nobody else would do it."

Birdsong's struggles follow a remarkable ascent to stardom for the eldest daughter of a Campbell Soup warehouse worker from Camden, N.J. In her early 20s, after learning to sing in the church choir, Birdsong became a doo-wop girl on the chitlin circuit, the network of venues where Black performers found refuge during segregation. While performing with Patti LaBelle & the Bluebelles, Birdsong often crossed paths with the Supremes, admiring the rising group's glamour before she eventually was picked to replace Ballard.

The switch in singers, which some later recognized as an inspiration for "Dreamgirls," the fictional musical and film, came at a critical moment for the Supremes. Their fame and influence had rocketed after No. 1 hits including "You Keep Me Hangin' On" and "You Can't Hurry Love," but a name change — to Diana Ross and the Supremes — reflected the group's shifting dynamics. Birdsong, a fluty soprano who bore a resemblance to Ballard — the women even had the same shoe and dress size — was professional, poised and well practiced. With her gentle manner and polished skills, she was well suited for a daunting role: keeping one of Motown's premier acts on track.

"Cindy had a strong voice and charisma," Gerald Posner, a Motown historian, said in an interview. "She's the one who had to make the change look seamless — and she did."

Birdsong's profile soared as a Supreme, for good and for bad. In 1969, she was kidnapped at knifepoint from her apartment and escaped by jumping from a moving vehicle, an incident that still shook her years later, friends and family said. The next year, Ross departed for a solo career, but Birdsong stayed on before being asked to leave the group in 1976. Not long after her departure, the singer said in interviews that she had agreed to a "bad closing deal" with Motown Records that left her financially bereft.

Facing divorce and deeply depressed, Birdsong said in an interview in the 1990s, she was suicidal, with "pills in one hand, television changer in the other," when she came upon the televangelist Jim Bakker preaching directly through the TV to a celebrity who had seen fame and glory but was ready to take their life. That was when she turned to religion, she said.

"God told me," Birdsong recalled, "what my whole life was about. He said, 'I gave you all these things and you got corrupted in them.' And I was ordained to serve him, even from the womb."

In the 1980s, Birdsong attempted a comeback as a soloist, but the effort petered out.

Susan Beachy contributed research. Lauren Herstik contributed reporting.



Top from left, Diana Ross, Mary Wilson and Cindy Birdsong on a London tour in 1968. Above, Ronald Birdsong, left, with his sister Cindy and his wife, Deadria Birdsong, about a decade ago. Above right, Rochelle Lander on the TV show "The Righteous Apples" in the early 1980s.

She came to share an apartment with Lander, who had also been a performer and appeared in several TV shows in the 1970s and '80s. Both women became increasingly involved with their faith, and Birdsong said she chose to sing religious music, not Motown or other pop, often working to bring Christian songs to children and homeless people.

In one incident in 2012, the record producer Steve Weaver recalled in a phone interview, he was preparing to record a duet featuring Birdsong and Scherrie Payne, another former Supreme. He said the project would have provided Birdsong with extra cash, but that Lander intervened in the studio, declaring Birdsong was "not recording any secular music now."

"Cindy went along with it," said Payne, who said she witnessed Lander step in. "She was heavily into her evangelism."

Money remained an issue despite efforts by some Motown alumni to help. Payne said she and Diana Ross gave Birdsong money. Eric Iversen, a manager of former Supremes, said he did too. Berry Gordy, the Motown founder who had hired Birdsong as a Supreme, also provided financial assistance to her over the years, according to a statement from his office.

For many in that circle, Birdsong's predicament echoed that of Ballard, who had ended up on welfare after being fired from

the Supremes. She died at 32 of cardiac arrest

For years, Birdsong's siblings did not take issue with Lander taking the lead on caring for their sister, they said. But Melody Birdsong, a sister-in-law, said that after Cindy had a second major stroke about seven years ago, Lander became increasingly secretive about the status of Birdsong's health, at one point refusing to tell the family the medical facility where she was receiving care.

"We didn't even know where Cindy was," Melody Birdsong said.

Birdsong's only child, David Hewlett, and her brother Ronald said that for years they had difficulty visiting Cindy or reaching her through Lander. Hewlett said that several years ago, he and Payne went to the apartment with the police to make certain they could gain entry.

Ronald Birdsong, who lives in New Jersey, said he once took a weeklong trip to California and tried to visit his sister repeatedly without success.

Mary Wilson, an original member of the Supremes who died in 2021, had discussed her own frustrations around not being able to reach Birdsong, said Mark Bego, a close friend who co-wrote a book about the group with her.

Family members initiated the conservatorship proceeding to ensure, they said, that Birdsong's life and finances could not again

become subject to Lander's control.

The court has scheduled a hearing for August.

Ronald Birdsong said the family hopes the conservatorship process will provide a more complete accounting of his sister's income and assets, though neither appear to be substantial. Birdsong is not known to have retained significant royalty rights, though she received payments totaling less than "six figures" from one company in 2021, according to Herman, who took over a bank account of hers that year.

The Birdsong family rejected Lander's assertion that they had never been there to help or offer financial assistance. Ronald Birdsong said he opened a joint bank account in his and his sister's name. Charles Hewlett, Birdsong's ex-husband, said he had sent checks. Both said Lander had declined their aid.

Herman said he became involved in Birdsong's affairs seven years ago, after a long-time mutual friend called him, concerned about the singer's well-being. Family members say he has been instrumental in making new care arrangements for Birdsong.

"Without Brad, I don't know where we'd be," Melody Birdsong said.

Family members said their concerns grew a few years ago when several relatives were allowed into the apartment and were shocked to find Cindy on a feeding tube. They resolved that day to find her a new living arrangement.

"I was so devastated this last time I went to see my sister because that's not how she was the last time that I saw her," Cindy's sister Terri Birdsong said. "I was able to feed her and cook for her and then I show up and she's on a feeding tube?"

During the 2021 police intervention, Lander defended her care of Birdsong. She complained that Birdsong never received needed money that had been raised for her in 2013 by a performing arts organization. She explained that she had been the person who arranged for her friend to move into a skilled nursing facility at one point, and she noted that the city's Adult Protective Services had been to the apartment and had not elected to remove her. (The agency declined to comment on its finding.)

Lander told the officers it was ill advised to take Birdsong to the hospital amid the pandemic, noting that they both had "religious objections" to the Covid vaccine.

"The family has known about this; they can't come in without giving me due process," Lander said before the emergency personnel entered and wheeled Birdsong out on a gurney, according to the video of the police response.

Clayton Golliher, a pastor and director of an organization called Hope for Homeless Youth, said Lander and Birdsong had been involved with his program for years and that he had never seen anything to question Lander's care and affection for Birdsong.

"I didn't get anything but 100 percent positive about Rochelle and the way she was sensitive to Cindy," Golliher said.

In the conservatorship application, Birdsong's condition is summarized by the nursing facility, which says that she is unable to get out of bed or communicate, and that she is on a feeding tube.

As Birdsong lay in bed last year, Herman brought in a figure from her Motown days, hoping that he could help energize her: Eddie Holland, a member of Holland-Dozier-Holland, the songwriting team behind many of the Supremes' hits. In an interview, Holland recalled that he started singing songs like "Baby Love" and "I Hear a Symphony," and saw a sign of recognition.

"For some reason she starts smiling," Holland said. "She grabbed my hand and sort of clutched my fingers."

## Assemblyman Injured at Armstrong Center

Jeffrion L. Aubry was knocked down at the opening ceremony.

By CHRISTOPHER KUO

In a jarring interruption to a day of celebration, Assemblyman Jeffrion L. Aubry of Queens was knocked over and injured Thursday morning at the opening ceremony of the new Louis Armstrong Center in Queens by a man who ran through the crowd after exiting his car, witnesses said.

Assemblyman Aubry, who is 75, had just spoken at the center's opening when the man collided with him. Mr. Aubry's head appeared to be bleeding, they said, and he was taken away on a stretcher with his head bandaged.

Aaron Prashad, 41, an emergency medical technician, said that he had watched as

Chelsia Rose Marcus contributed reporting.



Assemblyman Jeffrion L. Aubry of Queens was treated at a hospital for a laceration.

a man driving a silver Honda pulled onto the curb and accelerated toward the crowd, getting close to people before going into reverse and jumping out of the car as police officers approached. The man then sprinted through the crowd, he said, as officers chased after him.

"He was definitely going to drive through," said Mr. Prashad, who was born and raised in Queens.

Mary Claire Miskell, a publicist who works with the Armstrong Center, said she felt the man brush past her as he ran near the front of the crowd. She said Mr. Aubry was walking down from the stage, where he had just given a speech, when the man collided with him.

"They made basically full-body contact chest to chest and it knocked him over," Ms. Miskell said.

Mr. Aubry was taken to Elmhurst Hospital.

"The Assemblymember was treated and released from Elmhurst Hospital for a laceration over his eye," Tyquana Rivers, a political consultant who works with Mr. Aubry, said in a statement Thursday

evening. "He is in great spirits and doing well."

She said he was "only upset because he missed the rest of the long awaited celebration."

Police said Friday that Tyzah Bryant, 23, of Staten Island, had been arrested after the incident, saying that he had attempted to buy sneakers with counterfeit money earlier and fled in the car when he was challenged. He was charged with forgery, petit larceny, resisting arrest, and reckless endangerment.

The new center is across the street from the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Corona, Queens, where Armstrong, the jazz great, lived with his wife, Lucille, until his death in 1971. The center has an exhibit space and will be the home of the Louis Armstrong Archive. It has a 75-seat theater.

As people near the front cleared for emergency workers to help Mr. Aubry, Regina Bain, the executive director of the Louis Armstrong House Museum, urged everyone to remain calm. "If you are a praying person please pray for Jeff Aubry right now," she said.

While several emergency medical technicians bandaged Mr. Aubry and helped him to his feet, Ms. Bain led the crowd in singing the chorus "Come by here, my Lord."

Mr. Aubry was taken away on a stretcher, and the ceremony resumed with a speech by State Senator Jessica Ramos, who was in tears as she began her speech.

"Jeff Aubry is more than an institution — he is a treasure of this community," she said. "So I apologize if I'm a little emotional, but seeing him hurt hurts me and it hurts all of us."

Ms. Bain, the museum's executive director, said the assembled members of the community had tried to support Mr. Aubry — "We did that through music and we did that through prayer," she said — while also keeping the fleeing man in their thoughts.

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Your daily guide to theater

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BEYOND THE ALGORITHM



# Some Films Flying Under the Radar

By JASON BAILEY

Among the streaming gems are documentaries and inventive riffs on the biopic, the musical and the classic western.

## ‘Miles Ahead’ (2016)

Stream it on Amazon Prime Video.

Viewers hoping for a traditional music-legend biopic in the style of “Walk the Line” or “Ray” will most likely be baffled by this portrait of Miles Davis from Don Cheadle, who directs, co-writes and stars as the jazz great. Cheadle eschews the cradle-to-grave approach typical of such endeavors, instead building his narrative around a tall tale of Davis and a music journalist (Ewan McGregor) attempting to recover stolen tapes of his latest album. This mostly fictional fabrication gives Cheadle the leeway to create a playful, unpredictable and unexpected work — a cinematic reflection of the music that made him famous. Emayatzy Corinealdi is heart-wrenching as Davis’s wife Frances, while LaKeith Stanfield and Michael Stuhlbarg stand out in memorable supporting roles.

## ‘The Lure’ (2017)

Stream it on Max.

The Polish director Agnieszka Smoczyńska made her feature directing debut with this exhilaratingly odd mash-up of cabaret musical, sex comedy and folk horror tale. Michalina Olszanska and Marta Mazurek are Gold and Silver, a pair of mermaid sisters who leave their comfortable undersea homes in pursuit of a handsome human (shades of “The Little Mermaid”), and end up bumping and grinding at a seedy nightclub. Smoczyńska takes this literal fish-out-of-water tale and spices it up with unexpected genre flourishes; it’s the kind of movie where, if you’re not enjoying yourself, you merely have to wait a few scenes for it to become something else entirely.

## ‘St. Vincent’ (2014)

Stream it on Netflix.

The gruff but lovable geezer, the harried and hard-working single mom, the hooker with the heart of gold — the character types on display in Theodore Melfi’s comedy-drama are, to put it charitably, well-worn. Yet they’re written with such sensitivity and played with such nuance by Bill Murray, Melissa McCarthy and Naomi Watts that the amiable viewer won’t much mind; in fact, these overly familiar characters, and the stock situations Melfi writes them into, allow these actors to give them a good, old-fashioned, movie-star spit shine. All three pros are in fine form, with McCarthy particularly good in a lived-in, semi-dramatic turn that predicts her affecting work in “Can You Ever Forgive Me?” But the standout is young Jaeden Martell, charismatic and charming as the kid who brings them all together.

## ‘The Old Way’ (2023)

Stream it on Hulu.

So much of today’s B-movie output consists of Xeroxed action movies and unimaginative horror that it’s easy to forget how the western was once a key corner of that world. This revenge melodrama from the director Brett Donohoe serves as a reminder of the genre’s vitality, even on a low budget. Though burdened by a thin script and a distractingly contemporary look, the picture’s flaws are handily outweighed by the presence of Nicolas Cage in the leading role — shockingly, his first turn in an oater in a 100-plus film career. He brings a hard-fought gravitas to this old gunslinger character, his familiar face sharpened by weary eyes and deeply set lines reminiscent of old-school western stars like Randolph Scott and Audie Murphy.

## ‘Run All Night’ (2015)

Stream it on Max.

This Liam Neeson vehicle was released the year after “John Wick,” and feels, in retrospect, like the first of that film’s many imitators, with Neeson as a former Mob enforcer who puts his own life in jeopardy when he kills his boss’s trigger-happy son. Whatever its origins, this is one of Neeson’s better late-period action efforts, thanks to a stellar supporting cast (including Vincent D’Onofrio, Ed Harris, Bruce McGill, Lois Smith and a “John Wick: Chapter 2” co-star, Common) and a tightly focused Neeson performance; he has one especially good scene at the hospital bed of his dying mother, wearing the face of a man who knows how much he’s let her down.

## ‘The Exiles’ (2023)

Stream it on Amazon Prime Video.

Christine Choy, the initial subject of this documentary from the directors Violet Columbus and Ben Klein, is such a compelling, colorful character — a foul-mouthed, chain-smoking, no-nonsense local legend — that one could watch a film merely of her telling stories and barking complaints. But Columbus and Klein are up to much more than that. “The Exiles” details how the fellow documentarian Choy spent much of the summer of 1989 interviewing “political exiles” from the Tiananmen Square protests (and subsequent massacre) in China and attending their Stateside events. Decades later, she rediscovers that footage and sets about reconnecting with her subjects, a process that results in poignant reflection and righteous indignation over how their cause was adopted but eventually discarded by the U.S. government.



From top: Don Cheadle in “Miles Ahead”; from left, Marta Mazurek, Kunga Preis and Michalina Olszanska in “The Lure”; and Katharine Hepburn in the documentary “Call Me Kate.”

## ‘Call Me Kate’ (2022)

Stream it on Netflix.

Netflix is notoriously reluctant to license films from Hollywood’s golden era. But they will offer up the occasional documentary study of cinema history, such as “Five Came Back,” “Is That Black Enough for You?!” and this recent British documentary valentine to the one and only Katharine Hepburn. The writer and director Lorna Tucker draws from rare archival audio and home movies, elegantly assembling a portrait that both celebrates and demystifies her considerable legend. Intimate and unapologetic, it leaves the viewer with a keener understanding of Hepburn — the person and the persona.

## ‘Tim’s Vermeer’ (2014)

Stream it on Hulu.

The hullabaloo over A.I. and visual art makes this a fine time to revisit this provocative, pointed documentary, written by the magicians and self-appointed debunkers Penn and Teller, narrated by the former and directed by the latter. They detail the inventor Tim Jenison’s efforts to investigate and replicate the methodology of the Dutch master Johannes Vermeer, whose photorealistic paintings have impressed admirers and challenged skeptics for years. Assembled with the par’s usual potent mixture of cynicism and curiosity, it’s a compelling journey into the past with implications for the future.

# ‘Rust’ Case: Prosecutors Add Details

An evidence-tampering charge involves drugs.

By JULIA JACOBS

Prosecutors in New Mexico said in a court filing Thursday that the armorer who loaded the gun on the set of the film “Rust” before it went off during a rehearsal, killing the cinematographer, transferred a small bag of cocaine to someone after she was interviewed by the police on the day of the fatal shooting.

The armorer, Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, has been charged with involuntary manslaughter in the case. Last week, prosecutors added a new evidence-tampering charge, accusing her of passing drugs to another person to avoid criminal prosecution.

The prosecutors, Kari T. Morrissey and Jason J. Lewis, gave new details about the evidence-tampering charge in a request to a judge asking that their key witness — the person who says Ms. Gutierrez-Reed handed the cocaine off to them — have their identity protected initially.

The filing referred to the witness only as S1. The filing said that the witness “will testify that the defendant transferred a small bag of cocaine to S1 on the evening of Oct. 21, 2021, after the defendant returned from her interview at the police station on the day of the fatal shooting.”

The witness, described as an employee in the film industry, is worried about being “blacklisted” and pestered by the media if identified, the filing said. The prosecutors said that the witness’s identity would have to be revealed eventually.

In a statement on Friday, a lawyer for Ms. Gutierrez-Reed, Jason Bowles, questioned the sudden introduction of a new witness 20 months after the shooting.

“And the state won’t identify the person?” Mr. Bowles said. “This is a throwback to the secret, star-chamber prosecutions in England in the 15th century that were abolished. Like everything else with the state’s case and investigation, it’s full of sound and fury, but signifying nothing.”

Mr. Bowles has said that his client plans to plead not guilty to both charges against her.

The actor Alec Baldwin was rehearsing drawing an old-fashioned revolver from a shoulder holster when the gun, which was not supposed to be loaded with live ammunition, discharged. It fired a live round that killed the cinematographer, Halyna Hutchins, and injured the movie’s director, Joel Souza.

After the shooting, Ms. Gutierrez-Reed was interviewed by investigators from the Santa Fe County Sheriff’s Office, telling them that she had loaded the Long Colt revolver that day with what she believed to have been six dummy rounds, meaning inert cartridges used to appear like real rounds in close-up camera shots.

After that interview, prosecutors allege, Ms. Gutierrez-Reed handed off the bag of cocaine.

“The circumstances of the transfer of evidence strongly support the charge that the defendant transferred the cocaine to avoid prosecution,” the filing said, “and prevent law enforcement from obtaining highly inculpatory evidence directly related to the defendant’s handling of the firearm and the circumstances of the fatal shooting of Halyna Hutchins.”

Mr. Baldwin was charged with involuntary manslaughter, but prosecutors dismissed the case against him after learning that the gun may have been modified in a way that would have made it easier to discharge.

The conduct of the Santa Fe County Sheriff’s Office was recently criticized by an investigator who was leaving the district attorney’s office. The investigator, Robert Shilling, wrote in a June 20 email to colleagues that “their initial investigation is reprehensible and unprofessional to a degree I still have no words for.” The sheriff’s office declined to comment.

A judge is set to determine in August whether the charges against Ms. Gutierrez-Reed can go forward.

# Prosecutor Calls Kevin Spacey a ‘Sexual Bully’ as Trial Opens

The actor has pleaded not guilty to all charges of assault.

By ALEX MARSHALL

LONDON — The actor Kevin Spacey is “a sexual bully” who “delights in making others feel powerless and uncomfortable,” a prosecutor told a British jury on Friday. Speaking at Southwark Crown Court, the prosecutor, Christine Agnew, outlined her case against the Academy Award-winning actor, who is on trial in London facing multiple charges of sexual assault.

Ms. Agnew said that the actor’s “preferred method” of assault was to “aggressively grab other men in the crotch.” On one occasion, she said, Mr. Spacey had gone further and performed oral sex on a man while he was asleep.

The actor “abused the power and influence that his reputation and fame afforded



Kevin Spacey arriving at a London courthouse on Friday morning for his trial.

him” to take “who he wanted, when he wanted,” Ms. Agnew said.

Mr. Spacey has pleaded not guilty to all charges.

The actor, 63, faces 12 charges related to incidents that the prosecution says involved four men and occurred between 2001 and 2013. For much of that period, Mr. Spacey was the artistic director of the Old Vic theater in London.

Ms. Agnew said that the complainants included an aspiring actor and a man whom Mr. Spacey had met at a work event. Under British law, it is illegal to identify complainants in sexual assault cases or to publish information that may cause them to be identified.

Patrick Gibbs, Mr. Spacey’s legal representative, gave a short statement stressing his client’s innocence. He said the jury would hear some half truths, some “deliberate exaggerations” and “many damned lies.”

He asked the jury to consider the complainants’ motivations, and to think about whether the encounters could have been “reasonably believed to be consensual at the time.”

Ms. Agnew’s statement outlined each of the complainants’ specific accusations. She said that three accusers told the police that Mr. Spacey had grabbed their crotches, and one said Mr. Spacey had repeatedly placed the man’s hands onto his own crotch.

On one occasion, Ms. Agnew said, one of the men told Mr. Spacey never to grab him again. Mr. Spacey’s response was to laugh, then remark that the complainants’s anger “turned him on,” Ms. Agnew said.

The jury would also hear, Ms. Agnew said, from a man who says he went for a drink at Mr. Spacey’s apartment, where he fell asleep. A few hours later, the man woke to discover Mr. Spacey on his knees, performing oral sex on him, Ms. Agnew said. The man says that he pushed Mr. Spacey away,

then the actor asked him to leave, Ms. Agnew added.

She also discussed interviews that Mr. Spacey had given to the British police under caution. During one of those, she said, Mr. Spacey said that it was “entirely possible and indeed likely” that he had made “a clumsy pass” at other men but that he would never have touched someone’s crotch “without an indication of consent.”

Throughout Ms. Agnew’s almost 60-minute opening statement, Mr. Spacey sat in a large transparent box in the middle of the courtroom, wearing a light gray suit, white shirt and gold tie, watching intently. On several occasions, he looked at photographs in an evidence bundle. When Mr. Gibbs spoke, Mr. Spacey nodded along and looked at the jury.

Friday morning’s session ended shortly after Mr. Gibbs’s comments. The prosecution is scheduled to call its first witnesses on Monday.



# It’s Easy to Agree on What Is Bad Television

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1  
from that pull you identified. This is a 90-minute movie that doesn’t have the bonkers ideas, imagery or attitude to justify the five-plus hours it asks us to pay.

But you know, that first episode seemed like it was really up to and onto something. As TV, it ran tight and focused while being busy and, in its lewd way, suspenseful. It was funny, strange, knowingly acted and — as ensemble comedy and because of that erotic choreography — enticingly physical. We’re taken inside the hothouse of American celebrity to watch as it wilts beneath the California sun. We meet an army of competing personalities and competing interests, all trying to figure out what then seemed to be a question of murder-mystery proportions: How did that image of Jocelyn’s semen-stained face get all over the internet? And who is its owner? Turns out, the leak is a white herring.

An important joke is that the horror filmmaker Eli Roth is here, jutting in a small, pretty decent part. That’s because everything after the first episode, which ends with Tedros Tedros (yes, “Lolita” lovers) turning Jocelyn into a Magritte painting (tying her head up in a scarlet scarf) and then telling her to sing, is indeed a soulless trip to Ye Olde Torture-Porn Dungeon, albeit a bank-bustingly chic one.

**LINDSAY ZOLADZ** Hello, fellow world-class sinners. Jim, I agree that there is something rare about a show this chaotically messy in our age of middle-of-the-road prestige, but I’m not sure that it’s compellingly bad enough that I would recommend it to anyone for rubbernecking purposes. Life’s too short. As attempted commentary about pop stardom, I find the show to be repellently smug. It really thinks it has something profound to say about celebrity and even (help us) female empowerment, but its big ideas all ring disappointingly hollow.

And dramaturgically speaking — to quote Jeremy Strong, an actor I’d rather be watching on Sunday nights — “The Idol” is curiously inert. The story is muddled, the pacing is all over the place, the writing and performances can’t get me to care about the fates of any of the major characters.

The best thing about the show by far is its stellar supporting cast: Rachel Sennott is hilarious as Leia, a kind of skittishly basic, Gen-Z Marnie Michaels who finds herself plopped down uncomfortably in the middle of this den of sin. But my favorite member of the entourage is Da’Vine Joy Randolph, who brings a knowingness and a killer sense of comic timing to the role of Destiny, one of Jocelyn’s managers. Cast her in everything, please.

The flip side of the supporting actors’ strengths, though, is also one of the show’s main weaknesses: “The Idol” is at its worst



Above, clockwise from top left, Mitch Modes, Abel Tesfaye, Suzanna Son, Rachel Sennott, Moses Sumney and Troye Sivan. Left, Da’Vine Joy Randolph, who brought excellent comic timing to the part of Destiny, one of Jocelyn’s managers.



when its main characters are onscreen, which is most of the time.

The question I keep asking myself: Why is the Weeknd doing this? (Excuse me: Why is Abel Tesfaye doing this?) Over the past decade, the Toronto-born crooner has ascended to a level of pop stardom more stratospheric than even the fictional Jocelyn’s; “Blinding Lights,” his glisteningly paranoid 2019 single, is now the longest charting song by a solo artist ever on the Billboard Hot 100 as well as the most-streamed song in Spotify history. That makes him successful in a way that even a misguided passion project like “The Idol” is unlikely to put too large a dent in, though I can’t help but wonder if this tarnishes his reputation just a bit moving forward.

Jim, as someone less familiar with the Weeknd’s music, what impression is Tesfaye’s performance here making on you?

**PONIEWOZIK** To my eye (and ear), Tesfaye is reading the role rather than acting it. His performance is flat, except when he over-corrects into outbursts. It’s the actorly equivalent of wearing sunglasses indoors: It doesn’t look cool; it just keeps us from seeing your eyes. And his “I meant to do that” defenses in his interviews don’t help matters. Why is he doing this? Search me, but maybe the answer is in the credits: Maybe he feels that there is an “Abel Tesfaye” side to his talent that “the Weeknd” persona does not sufficiently express. But if he’s willing to stretch in a new direction, he’s not yet Abel.

In general, to bring up another bad HBO memory, “The Idol” has what I think of as the “Entourage” problem. For most of that show’s run, I could never quite tell if I was meant to think Vinny Chase was talented or just a pretty face who believed his own P.R.

That issue is everywhere here. Is Jocelyn’s single ... good? Is the remix? Is Tedros smart? Musically savvy? Charismatic? Good at sex? I don’t know, and if “The Idol” does, it also seems willing to reverse things on a dime to make the story go where it needs to, as when Jocelyn swerves within the space of an episode from being totally in Tedros’s thrall to calling him out and calling the shots. I would love to know what either of you think we’re supposed to think about Jocelyn.

**MORRIS** Let’s talk about it! First of all, that song ... it’s what plays while you make re-

ance than to anything conventionally American.

Anyway, Jocelyn has been written as a mess, this victim (her abusers include her recently deceased mom and the maw of showbiz) whose post-traumatic stress has led her, we’re asked to believe, to a Sven-gali’s cult whose M.O. is basically “let Tedros Tedros make you suffer for your art.” But is she any kind of artist? The most irritating part of the show is maybe its point: Much stronger, more original talent surrounds Jocelyn, but her white blondness overtakes any determination to coax it.

The show is chronically offering much better stuff than Jocelyn’s potential hit “World Class Sinner.” In the first episode it is prolonged exposure to Madonna’s “Like a Prayer”; in Episode 4 it’s the singing and songwriting of another of Tedros’s captives, a strawberry shortcake named Chloe (Suzanna Son). In the show’s only feat of poignant emotional connection, she learns from Destiny how to use her tongue to produce stronger (perhaps Blacker) singing. But Destiny is supposed to be Jocelyn’s manager! Has she ever advised her client to do that?

Lindsay, I like Destiny, too. Sometimes. But she spends a week watching an adult man do terrible stuff to all kinds of people, including her client, and says nothing of consequence. This isn’t management. It’s babysitting.

**ZOLADZ** Jim, I am constantly coming back to the questions you asked: Are we supposed to think Jocelyn’s music is any good? And, more vexingly, are we supposed to think the music she’s making with Tedros is better than the music the label wants her to record? (Remember a few years ago when we were all arguing over whether or not the pop songs in “A Star Is Born” were supposed to be bad? “The Idol” has me desperately missing Ally and her alternate-universe banger “Hair Body Face.” Jocelyn could never.)

I do think we’re supposed to find “World Class Sinner” to be cloying and superficial, but the music she’s making with Tedros is bad, too. Some of this is Depp’s performance. She’s a watchable screen presence, but she’s a weak vocalist, and it’s often hard to tell if the vacancy she projects when she’s singing these songs is written into the char-

acter or merely a limitation of her performance. Whether intentional or not, she’s certainly playing Jocelyn like a cipher, which can make for confusing and frustrating viewing.

What most gets on my nerves about the show’s philosophy about pop music, though, is that on some level it does feel like a self-aggrandizing commercial for the Weeknd. When Tedros wants to impress Jocelyn with his industry connections, he books a session with — cue the impressed gasps from basically everyone in Joc’s entourage — Mike Dean, a producer with whom the Weeknd often works.

I mean, the show takes place in Tesfaye’s own Beverly Hills mansion and features innumerable characters telling Joc how dope her house is. Tesfaye has taken great pains to point out that Tedros is not a self-portrait, and of course it’s not: For one thing, Tedros isn’t a musician. But no amount of gauche rattail wigs and zipped-up wind-breakers can make this show the artistic risk or the expression of vulnerability that Tesfaye seems to think it is.

The Weeknd’s songs tint the show’s atmosphere — Episode 4 centered, right on the nose, on his too-languid cover of John Lennon’s “Jealous Guy” — ultimately perfuming the show with an ever-present whiff of self-satisfaction.

**PONIEWOZIK** So what is this show trying to say, from behind its red-fabric gag? It seems to buy big into the idea that authenticity in art comes from suffering. And it’s full of provocations about how carnality is the soul of music. These two concepts come together in the show’s S&M fixation: Rough sex, in its vision (or at least Tedros’s), is the hairbrush for the frozen sea within us. On top of that, there’s a lot of something-something about how the corporate music money machine wants to repress the artist’s wildest urges.

It’s hard to see these themes play out in “The Idol” without thinking of the criticisms of how Levinson sexualizes his young female characters in “Euphoria.” Most of the first episode is about Jocelyn’s handlers trying to rein in her sexuality and using the language of “wellness” and “slut-shaming” and “revenge porn” as P.R. tools. It all feels like a straw-diva rebuttal: “You call it exploitation, but look, this fictional woman I created wants to show her nipples on camera! Woke capitalism won’t let her express herself!”

The stressed-out suits, however, are easily the best part of the show. Half of it is a caustic, “Veep” style industry satire about the star-maker machinery, with strong work from Randolph, Hank Azaria and Jane Adams (the best part of “Hung,” that raunchy HBO train wreck of yesteryear).

Say you gave the show a Jocelyn-ectomy; say she and Tedros and the entire Spahn Mansion high jinks were this offscreen problem that they had to talk about and manage (but also try to profit from). That could be brutally effective. But then what would the Weeknd do?

**MORRIS** I love the idea of a starless “Idol.” It’s funny: There is no shortage of recent television about either famous artists or our obsession with them — “Dave,” Paper Boi in “Atlanta,” “Daisy Jones & the Six,” “The Swarm” — and not many of them are terribly enlightening about how fame feels. Mass culture enhanced and exacerbated its modern incarnation yet continues to be lousy at illuminating critiques of it.

Not even the Weeknd really seems to have an answer for what celebrity is, what makes someone a star. (So many times in this show we hear someone say that so-and-so is a star, but it’s definitely not Jocelyn.) The one character who approximates the requirements is Tedros — in the world of the show, the outsize magnetism belongs to him.

Of course, that fame is artificial; his worshipers are more afraid than admiring. I wouldn’t be surprised to discover his heroes are Ike Turner and Ron O’Neal’s Youngblood Priest in “Super Fly.” At some point, Tedros looks up, searchingly, at an almost life-size photo of Prince, a star who is known to have had his own moments of Tedrosity.

The show is strange about Black men and sex. And no one in the show talks about it. A funny intergenerational fender-bender happens when Azaria’s Chaim implores Leia to describe Tedros and she keeps identifying him as a person of color, and Chaim keeps asking whether she’s trying to say he’s Black.

The whole show is like that about Tedros and Moses Sumney’s Izaak, its two Black male characters: tentative. It doesn’t know what more to do with a scenario that’s freighted with this country’s long history of racialized sex than to be a troll about it.

I’m with you two: For all the sex and vulgarity we see and hear about, the show has no idea how to convey what’s pleasurable about it, about what we come to certain pop music to experience.

I know we don’t know where this going, how it’s going to end. I don’t know whether anyone should care, or even what would be a satisfying outcome for Tedros in Sunday’s finale. All I know is that when Destiny proposed murder, I clapped.



Below left, the producer Mike Dean (foreground at right), who has worked with Tesfaye (left) in the past, appeared as himself in the penultimate episode. Below right, Lily-Rose Depp in “The Idol.”



# Travel



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DRAGANA RANKOVIC FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## At Ease in the Land of Knights and Rainbow Flags

Malta is gearing up to show off its history of openness, as well as its Baroque treasures, when it hosts EuroPride in September.

By ALEXANDER LOBRANO

I was having a nightcap at the Art Deco Phoenicia Hotel in Valletta, Malta, when a former British naval officer struck up a chat, saying that he thought Prince Philip, Queen Elizabeth II’s husband, was the handsomest man he’d ever seen.

The prince and the future monarch spent the early years of their marriage in Malta, the former base of the British Mediterranean fleet, where Philip was posted to a ship.

Malta, the expat explained, had always been “very pleasant” for gay men. “So many sailors and soldiers,” he said, sipping his drink. “This lovely little island is even better today, though, because now everything’s all out in the open and not only does no one bat an eyelash, it’s just not an issue here anymore.”

Perhaps this attitude explains why Valletta, the tiny capital of the smallest country in the European Union — five islands in the Mediterranean between Sicily and Tunisia, with a population of about 538,000 — will be hosting EuroPride this September. This annual L.G.B.T.Q. event, which began in 1992, is awarded to a different European city every year. Valletta, with only about 6,000 residents, will be the smallest host city to date.

“This celebration is an important opportunity for us to show off why Malta was rated No. 1 by the Rainbow Europe index,” said Toni Attard, the artistic director for Valletta’s EuroPride program. The index is a ranking by ILGA-Europe, a nonprofit organization that monitors the legal and social climate for L.G.B.T.Q. people in 27 E.U. countries.

### Tradition of Tolerance

I had come to Malta from my home in France for a long weekend to explore what exactly makes it so hospitable to visitors — gay and straight alike.

“Our identity is an amalgam,” said Liam Gauci, the curator of the Malta Maritime Museum. “We’re Roman Catholic, but the word for God in Maltese, a Semitic language, is Allah, a reflection of the two centuries the Arabs ruled Malta after invading in 870 A.D. These contradictions make us wryly tolerant of differences, including sexual ones.”

He added: “The church may have frowned on it, but homosexuality was common among ship crews. The Grand Court of Malta even ruled in favor of Rosa Mifsud, a transgender Maltese, who filed a petition in 1744 to be officially recognized as a male.”

When I arrived in Valletta, the sun was just about to set. Inside the town’s stone ramparts, the steep streets were lined with stone houses whose balconies recalled the mashrabiya, or screened wooden porches, in the old quarters of Cairo and Tunis.

I stopped at the Casa Rocca Piccola B & B — in a Baroque 16th-century mansion that’s also open to visitors — just long enough to leave my bags. A dinner reservation awaited.

Just a few blocks away, at the Michelin-starred restaurant Noni, Ritiene Brincat, who manages the dining room for her brother, the chef Jonathan Brincat, showed me to a table in a vaulted stone cellar.

Knowing nothing about Maltese food, I



Top, Grand Harbor in Valletta, the capital of Malta. Middle, a Pride flag in Malta, which has a long history of tolerance toward L.G.B.T.Q. people. Above, from left: people enjoying busy times in Valetta, and in Paceville, Malta’s nightlife district.

assumed it would be a variation on the fare of nearby Sicily. Instead, such dishes as a ruddy fish bouillon seasoned with mandarin orange oil, risotto with local red prawns, and red porgy with stuffed zucchini flowers, sea urchin and a luscious fish-bone-and-citrus sauce revealed an intriguingly refined and umami-rich cuisine.

“Our food is a reflection of all of the peoples who ruled us,” Mr. Brincat said. “We eat broad beans like the Egyptians and dolmas similar to what you find in Libya. We’ve been cooking with spices like nutmeg and cardamom for centuries, because we were a provisioning stop for ships transporting spices from India and further east to Northern Europe.”

British rule from 1814 to 1964 also left its mark, he said, recalling a favorite childhood dish: a variation of a Bolognese sauce with tomatoes and chopped corned beef, a staple of the British Navy.

### Baroque Masterworks

Malta is only 122 square miles, so 72 hours had seemed like an adequate amount of time to explore. But I quickly realized that I’d need at least a week if I wanted to take a ferry to experience the turquoise waters and grilled rock lobster of Gozo, the wild northernmost island of the archipelago. That would have to wait until the next trip.

I decided to check out the main island first, and then Valletta itself after that. Anna Grech Sant, a local guide, offered an abbreviated but fascinating lesson in Maltese history.

Spiteri was the name given to the children of unmarried members of the Order of Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem — more commonly known as the Knights of Malta — the Catholic military order that ruled Malta for centuries after Charles V, the Holy Roman emperor, granted them the island in 1530. “Spiteri is

### IF YOU GO

**Where to stay** Casa Rocca Piccola B & B, rooms from 240 euros, or about \$260.

**Where to eat** Noni (four-course tasting menu €104, five-course tasting menu €125); Grain Street (entrees from €16 to €34).

**Places to see** Mdina, St. John’s Co-Cathedral (adults €15), National Museum of Archaeology (adults €5), Upper Barakka Gardens.

**Getting around** Malta is served by an extensive network of buses and ferries. If you want to visit the island of Gozo, the fast ferry from Valletta takes 45 minutes and costs €7.50 each way.

also a common surname on Malta today,” Ms. Grech Sant said with a chuckle.

A 30-minute drive or bus ride from Valletta, Mdina, Malta’s old capital, was built by the Arabs on the site of a former Roman city. Behind its thick stone walls, it’s an elegant Baroque town best visited at night after the crowds of tourists have left.

After crossing a bridge over the bastion of the old fortress, now planted as gardens, we visited the 17th-century Cathedral of St. Paul, then stopped in at the Palazzo Falson, a townhouse that’s one of the oldest buildings in Malta. The palazzo, formerly the home of a wealthy collector, displays paintings, furniture, silver, armor, jewelry and coins.

Back in Valletta, the capital since 1571, the nearly 450-year-old cathedral St. John’s “is worth a trip to Malta all on its own,” Ms. Grech Sant said. St. John’s reveals the pulsing intersection between faith and sensuality that is the triumph of Baroque art.

After a visit to the National Museum of Archaeology, which is housed in a 16th-century former lodge of the Knights of Malta, I cooled off next to the fountain in the Upper Barakka Gardens, one of densely populated Valletta’s favorite green spaces, with sweeping views of the Grand Harbor.

After a packed day, I wanted to save enough energy to sample the nightlife, so I had an early dinner of squid ink lasagna with the soft, spicy Calabrian sausage ‘nduja, and local rabbit cooked in mustard and tarragon at Grain Street, the casual and more affordable sibling of the Michelin-starred Under Grain.

The pumping nightlife district of Paceville (pronounced PAH-chuh-ville) is in St. Julian’s, a 15-minute ferry trip and a short cab ride away from Valletta. It could have been Hvar, Croatia, or Mykonos: Think crowded terraces with an international crowd of gay and straight revelers sipping giant cocktails with Day-Glo straws, and this summer’s earworm, Kylie Minogue’s “Padam Padam,” permeating the pavement. Paceville looked like it would be a lot of fun around 1 a.m., but it had already been a long day, and a serious cocktail seemed in order.

That was why I ended up at the Phoenicia Hotel’s Club Bar, where my new friend, the former British naval officer, and I leaned into our conversation, and our drinks. “The Maltese are a worldly and open-minded people,” he said, echoing my all-too-brief experience on the island. “This is why I think the EuroPride in September’s going to be just wonderful, for everyone.”



# The Road Less Traveled Leads to Tasty Wines

Exploring California vineyards that are far from Napa Valley and its busloads of tourists.

By LAURA M. HOLSON

It is a trek to Windy Oaks Estate Vineyard & Winery in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, a journey that includes passing through a forest damp with coastal fog. Storms battered Northern California this winter and, at one point along the route, a chunk of asphalt had tumbled into a soggy creek. A carpet of moss covered a stone bridge built in 1939, its markings now barely legible. It was as if nature was taking the road back. Oak trees and wood fences — even an old parked motorcycle — were consumed by lichen.

But beyond the mottled redwoods and moss-covered oaks, rows of grapevines appeared on a sunny hillside in Corralitos, where Windy Oaks was built on a former apple orchard with sweeping views of Monterey Bay. Windy Oaks is one of a growing patchwork of wineries an hour's drive south from Silicon Valley that are making and serving prizewinning chardonnay, pinot noir and other estate vintages. If winemakers in Sonoma and Napa Valleys, farther north, are viewed as sophisticated siblings, the wineries in the triangle formed by the towns of Corralitos, Morgan Hill and Hollister are their relaxed country cousins. They are related, but each has its own quirks.

There is a bucolic charm in these less-traveled byways. Local beekeepers sell honey out of the backs of their pickup trucks. Bags of Meyer lemons, \$5 apiece, are stacked in self-service roadside cubbies. Goats graze just about everywhere. And if you take a wrong turn, you might find yourself at Gizdich Ranch in Watsonville, where you can pick your own berries and eat a slice of apricot pie.

Mostly, though, newcomers to the area are delighted that the busloads of noisy tourists that clog the Silverado Trail in Napa Valley in summer don't exist here. That means you can enjoy a quiet picnic in the middle of a vineyard. Who knows? Maybe the server pouring wine that day might be the winemaker herself.

At Windy Oaks I was greeted by Cookies, a portly cat who followed me to a table at



Above, the Windy Oaks Estate Vineyard & Winery. Far left, a barrel storage room at Calera Wine Co., in Hollister, Calif. Near left, the vineyards at Sarah's Vineyard in Gilroy, Calif. Below, a tasting at Calera Wine.

the edge of a row of vines. Two couples had arrived before me and laid out a feast of cheese and sausages from Corralitos Market & Sausage Co. One of the picnickers offered me a Polish sausage, rich and peppery, that paired nicely with the 2020 Henry's Block estate pinot noir I was tasting.

In 2001, Windy Oaks' founding winemaker, Jim Schultze, and his wife, Judy, released their first 36 cases of pinot noir. The Henry's Block I tasted was from the original three-acre vineyard planted in 1996 and named after Judy's father. The Schultzes now tend 27 acres and make 5,000 cases of wine a year, buying grapes from nearby Monterey County to supplement what they don't grow.

My server, Elaine, was unhurried, explaining that the grapes were processed with minimal intervention as it's done in Burgundy. As a bonus, she offered me a taste not on the menu: the Judy's Block estate pinot noir from 2018. Grown on half an acre and aged in a single barrel, only 24 cases of the wine were produced. (It costs \$110 per bottle.) I bought a sparkling pinot noir and, after giving Cookies one last belly rub, strolled to the top of the hill where I watched sailboats drift out to sea.

About 20 miles east of Corralitos, along the southernmost edge of the Santa Clara Valley, a group of wineries is wedged between Gilroy and Morgan Hill — everything from mom-and-pop enterprises to award-winning pros. In the mid-1800s, the valley was a prominent producer of wine grapes. But decades later, many vineyards here were devastated by phylloxera, an aphid-like insect that devours the roots and leaves of grapevines. Farmers switched to growing plum and apricot trees in the 1900s, as well as garlic and tomatoes, before urban sprawl and, later, Silicon Valley, pushed out most of the farms. Still, pockets of winemaking remain.

In 2021, a new winemaking co-op was opened in Gilroy to serve a burgeoning class of local vintners. It was founded by Tim Slater, the owner of Sarah's Vineyard, which is situated at the base of Mount Madonna, a popular hiking spot with 200-foot-tall redwoods and miles of forested trails. Sarah's was built in a low valley where spring's green fields turn crisp and golden by July. Breezes that drift off the Pacific Ocean cool the warm inland air, allowing the grapes to thrive.

Sarah's was busy when I arrived on a



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DREW KELLY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

**Prizewinning bottles, an hour's drive south from Silicon Valley.**

Sunday, with most of the 15 or so tables filled with groups or families. A father and son played bocce on a nearby court, while two young girls sat quietly with their parents at a table eating carrot sticks and coloring in books. I ordered a \$30 reserve flight, which included four red wines: two pinot noirs, a cabernet sauvignon and Sarah's Nuit d'Enfer, a blend of cabernet franc and merlot.

Service was halting, though, so I asked my server to bring all four wines at the same time. And some of the staff seemed unprepared to answer even basic questions, relying on rudimentary winemaking notes. Still, the flight was fairly priced, and the valley views charming.

By contrast, Geoff and Chantelle Mace, the owners of Calerain Wines, greeted guests themselves on a recent Saturday at their tasting room in the middle of a tiny vineyard on the outskirts of Gilroy. Mr. Mace offered pours of a 2021 pinot noir from grapes grown in the Paicines area, about 35 miles away. Like many local winemakers,

Mr. Mace procures grapes from growers in different regions and makes the wine himself.

Perhaps it was the flowers that Mr. Mace said they recently planted, or maybe because the tasting room is behind the house where he and his wife live, but the experience reminded me of the rustic family-owned vineyards I have visited in southern Italy.

About 10 miles away, the tasting room at Lightpost Winery in Morgan Hill can be found in a ho-hum office park. But what it lacks in pastoral ambience, it made up for in intellectual heft. There I met Sofia Fedotova, an electronics recycling entrepreneur who made money in tech before becoming a vintner. In 2018, she opened Lightpost and teamed with Christian Roguenant, who grew up in Burgundy and is Lightpost's head winemaker.

Lightpost planted a vineyard in Morgan Hill seven years ago but, for now, mostly gets its wine grapes from growers in the Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo,

Russian River and Paso Robles regions. Ms. Fedotova poured me a taste of her favorite cabernet sauvignon. We talked about what to serve it with (she said steak, I suggested rack of lamb) and, for another 20 minutes, we discussed the area's weather patterns, soil chemistry and the challenge of farming in today's climate.

Of course, you would expect a winemaker to know more about the terrain than the average guest. But the staff was equally knowledgeable. Vivian, the tasting room manager, gave us an impromptu lesson, too, with a side-by-side comparison of how grapes vary by vintage. A larger, more corporate tasting room would be hard-pressed to take the time. Already the young winery is attracting attention; its 2018 reserve cabernet sauvignon from Paso Robles has won state competitions. A friend and I stayed for nearly two hours and, between us, left with three bottles of their La Grande Sofi sparkling rose from 2018 (\$44 each).

Bay Area wine lovers who venture this far south are often on their way to Calera Wine Co. in Hollister, a pioneer in American pinot noir. In 1974, Josh Jensen purchased a limestone-rich parcel of land near Mount Harlan in San Benito County. He had been told by his winemaking mentors in France that pinot noir and chardonnay grapes needed limestone-rich soil to make truly great wines. In 1975, he started with 24 acres of pinot noir on three separate parcels, naming each one to show that they would produce their own distinct wines.

The winery was built halfway between Mount Harlan and Hollister, in the foothills of the Gabilan Mountains. To get there, I drove through straw-colored flatlands east of U.S. Route 101, where cows grazed, and patches of yellow mustard and Queen Anne's lace brightened the drab landscape. The mood changed as I wound through the foothills to Calera. A ribbon of oak trees snaked its way down a sunken valley. Hawks soared high in the sky. In "East of Eden," John Steinbeck described the Gabilan Mountains as "full of sun and loveliness and a kind of invitation." The winery beckoned.

Calera had a more polished, corporate feel than the other wineries I visited. That is no surprise, I guess, because Mr. Jensen in 2017 sold Calera to Duckhorn Portfolio, which owns several other prominent California wineries. (He died last year.) I grabbed a seat on the veranda overlooking a lake, next to a couple who said they came every Sunday for a glass of wine. The breeze smelled like fresh hay and wildflowers; blue jays fluttered in the canopy of wisteria. It was blissfully quiet. No cars. No mindless chatter or bleating cellphones. Just the soulful caw of a crow in the distance.

A server delivered five glasses stacked on a metal tree to my table with a sheet of tasting notes that explained each wine. I enjoyed the chenin blanc, but it was the pinot noir (as you might expect) that really stood out. As I finished my last sip, about three dozen sparrows swooped into a nearby bush, bobbing and flapping their wings as they competed for space on the pencil-thin branches. I guess I found a traffic jam after all.



36 HOURS  
PARIS

There is a reason Paris remains among the most visited cities in the world. Its scenic, walkable neighborhoods have been shaped by centuries of cultural and political history, and any short visit will involve tough decisions. Monuments like Notre-Dame and the Eiffel Tower need no introduction. Instead, this guide presents a different side of the French capital: under-the-radar spots in the popular Montmartre hilltop neighborhood, smaller museums without crowds and a taste of Paris’s diverse performance scene. And it’s easier to get around: As the city gears up for the 2024 Summer Olympics, the first it is hosting in a century, the venerable subway (the métro) is undergoing a makeover, with extensions to several lines. Spot the layers of urban transformation underway — while staying alert to the mille-feuille of art and architecture you’ll encounter everywhere. **LAURA CAPPELLE**

## Friday

## 2:30 P.M. | SIP UNDER A GLASS ROOF

Ease into Parisian life in La Verrière, a light-filled and typically quiet cafe with plush armchairs and a stunning glass roof inside the 19th-century InterContinental Paris le Grand Hotel in the Ninth Arrondissement. On the back of each armchair is a different pastoral scene in mint green, the color matching the frame of the glass roof and the surrounding greenery. The prices are high end, but the “gourmand” tea or coffee option (16 euros, or about \$17.50) comes with three small pastries. Down the street from the hotel, pause to look at the many sculptures adorning the Palais Garnier, Paris’s most opulent opera house, inaugurated in 1875. At the very top, notice the sculpture of Apollo (by Aimé Millet) holding forth his lyre for all to see in the boulevards below.

## 3:30 P.M. | SEE A PAINTER’S STUDIO

There are well over 100 museums in Paris, and smaller ones can be more rewarding than shuffling along with the crowds at the Louvre. The Gustave Moreau Museum (entry €7), a house-museum south of Montmartre, was conceived by the 19th-century painter Gustave Moreau, an early exponent of Symbolism with a visionary flair for mythological subjects, before his death. The first-floor rooms were Moreau’s apartment, and are covered from floor to ceiling with his art collection and expensive knickknacks. Most spectacular is the large, magnificent studio on the second and third floors, connected by a winding, wrought-iron staircase, that shows Moreau’s mysterious depictions of the Jewish princess Salome, as well as some stunning unfinished paintings, like “The Three Magi.” Another small-but-mighty collection nearby is the Musée de la Vie Romantique (free except for exhibitions), which offers a taste of Paris’s Romantic-era artistic salons.

## 5 P.M. | WANDER AMONG GRAVES

Under a viaduct, the Montmartre Cemetery is an oasis of calm. Built in the early 19th century, it is the resting place of French painters, authors and performers, yet it also feels slightly anarchic, with lesser-known tombstones that are just as arresting (try to spot the one shaped as a large question mark). The cemetery is free to visit: Just borrow one of the laminated maps under the large sign by the entrance to find your way to specific graves, like that of the dancer and choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky, adorned with a statue that shows him in one of his most famous roles, Petrushka. Other notable tombstones include a life-size statue of the singer Dalida, a bust of the author Émile Zola and the raised grave of the courtesan Alphonsine Duplessis, the inspiration behind Alexandre Dumas’s 19th-century novel “Lady of the Camellias” (to this day, visitors leave camellias for her).

## 6:30 P.M. | MOULIN ROUGE COCKTAILS

While visitors flock to Montmartre for its artistic history and quaint sights, few know about the bar tucked behind the red windmill of the Moulin Rouge, the storied cabaret. Le Bar à Bulles, which opened in 2015 and has a separate entrance via a small pedestrian street to the left of the Moulin Rouge, is a refreshingly quirky alternative to the area’s tourist magnets. Sip on Anaë gin, produced in southwestern France, with tonic (€11.50) and enjoy a cheese plate (€18) on the leafy rooftop or in the colorful indoor space, full of mismatched furniture and lampshades hanging from the ceiling. Some nights, concerts and events add to the warm, busy atmosphere.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOANN PAI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Top, a view over the Paris rooftops, as dusk nears, with the Eiffel Tower in the distance. Above left, Nijinsky’s grave as seen at Montmartre Cemetery. Built in the early 19th century, it is the resting place of many French painters, writers and performers. Above center, at Le 975, the offerings include tomato and cassis gazpacho with stracciatella, and pork with black sesame juice. Above right, the cafe La Verrière is light-filled and typically quiet.

## 8 P.M. | TASTE BISTRONOMIE

Bistronomie describes the cross between homely bistro food and high-end gastronomy, without the stiffness of fine dining. Many restaurants around Montmartre are pushing the cuisine forward by embracing seasonal ingredients, while maintaining prices that can weather the rising cost of living in France. To the north of the Montmartre Cemetery, the bright, newly opened Le 975 offers smart twists on French cuisine, led by the Japanese-born chef Taiki Tamao, and unusually warm service by Parisian standards (four-course tasting menu, non-vegetarian, €49). Another option is Polissons, on a busier street, which goes bigger with six mystery courses (standard, €65; or vegetarian, €45). You can also order off the menu: You won’t regret the oysters with umami lemon as a starter, if they are available.

## 10 P.M. | SASHAY INTO DRAG

Don’t expect any lip syncs at Madame Arthur, a Montmartre drag cabaret whose history goes back to 1946 and that reopened in 2015: Its resident troupe is composed of singers and musicians who perform live nightly, and have helped push drag’s recent renaissance in France. Skip the 8 p.m. main-stage show for the more intimate 11 p.m. “recital,” in which performers sing whatever they like, from opera to American pop translated into French (€15 at the door only, arrive early). There are few tables, but stand right by the piano to see stars like the wry Charly Voodoo up close. This summer, Madame Arthur is trying out a new 10 p.m. English-language show (€20, Thursday to Saturday, on the main stage). Afterward, dance the night away.

## Saturday

## 10 A.M. | TOUR CENTURIES OF ART

Near the quieter south portion of the Champs-Élysées, the Petit Palais is an underrated gem on the Paris museum circuit. This ornate, domed venue was built for the 1900 Universal Exhibition, the world’s fair, after a design competition won by Charles Girault; today it is the official Museum of Fine Arts of the city of Paris (others are state run). It offers a short, delightfully random tour through French art history, with some European detours. One minute, you’re looking at Orthodox icons and medieval artworks; the next, a painting by Claude Monet, Gustave Courbet or Berthe Morisot — all while steps from an 18th-century sedan chair and a sculpture gallery. (Permanent collections, free; ticketed exhibitions, €15.)



## NOON | JAPANESE-KOREAN LUNCH

From the Petit Palais, walk through the Tuileries gardens, a French formal park adjoining the Louvre, to reach the Japanese-Korean food district, loosely organized around Rue Sainte-Anne. Bistrot Mee, where Korean dishes are presented with neat visual flair, is consistently excellent. Get a mix of starters (all €6), which include great vegetarian options like the leek pancake and vegetable fritters. For a little sweetness after, Aki Boulangerie, a local institution, offers fusion French-Japanese sweets, like an azuki-bean-based Paris-Brest (a choux-and-praline pastry dessert) and yuzu- or matcha-flavored éclairs (around €3 to 5). Get a selection to go and enjoy them in the nearby garden of the Palais-Royal.

## 2 P.M. | SHOP VINTAGE FASHION

You can find the biggest French couture brands all around the world these days, so instead of Chanel, look to vintage specialists. In the historical Marais district, start with Mam’zelle Swing, a brightly colored shop that stocks 1920s to 1960s women’s fashion, including bold, oversize earrings and cinched-waist dresses. Walk north, past Rue des Rosiers (part of the historical Jewish quarter) and the Picasso Museum, to the hip Oberkampf area to find Clara Vintage, which specializes in luxury women’s fashion (with a selection of men’s accessories), and Lapin Boutique Vintage, founded in 2021 by a former English teacher with a great eye for shape and colors. Stop for a scoop (around €4) of strawberry-hibiscus or even squash ice cream at the experimental, award-winning Une Glace à Paris. Or if you favor macarons, Pierre Hermé is considered by many in Paris to be superior to the more famous Ladurée.

## 4:30 P.M. | TAKE IN GARDENS

Cross to the city’s Left Bank via Sully Bridge, taking in views from the small triangular garden at the tip of the Île Saint-Louis, the quieter of the two islands on the Seine. From Oberkampf, this half-hour walk will take you to the Jardin des Plantes, a botanical park that started as a royal medicinal garden in the 17th century. Stroll through, with the National Museum of Natural History in the background, and visit the gardens’ four greenhouses (€7). Exit via the west gates to find the Grand Mosque of Paris. Inaugurated in the wake of World War I, in part to commemorate the sacrifices of colonized Muslims who fought for



France, it features a patio with a sculpted cedar wood door adorned with Quran verses, built by highly skilled North African craftsmen (visit, €3). Pause for a glass of mint tea (€2) in the courtyard or get a good scrubbing or massage at the ornate, sizable hammam (from €30, women only).

## 8 P.M. | SEE SOME THEATER

The Odéon — Théâtre de l’Europe offers the option of English surtitles for its Saturday shows during its September-to-June season. For a pretty cheap price (€14 to €40), you might see experimental French theater, a star vehicle with the likes of Isabelle Huppert onstage, or a hotly anticipated production by a top European director. For a post-show dinner, the nearby Bouillon Racine, a mirror-filled Art Nouveau brasserie, knows its French classics, like snails (€12.50) and blood sausages with foie gras (€11); book ahead. For late-night music afterward, the St.-Germain-des-Prés quarter is known for its jazz clubs like the Caveau des Oubliettes, where musicians perform under the arched stone ceiling of a former medieval prison.

## Sunday

## 10 A.M. | EXPLORE AN URBAN PARK

On the northern edge of Paris, the 136-acre Parc de la Villette, with its gardens, canals and cultural spaces, isn’t a tourist magnet, but its popularity has skyrocketed in recent years as the area has gentrified and new venues brought more events. The park is dotted with distinctive, sharply drawn red structures designed by the deconstructivist architect Bernard Tschumi in the 1980s. See the futuristic silver architecture of the Paris Philharmonic, inaugurated in 2015, and stop by the large dance floor installed under the arches of the Grande Halle: Hip-hop dancers frequently train there and relish an audience. Funky thematic playgrounds include the Garden of Childhood Fears, a mysterious forest, and the Garden of the Dragon, whose tongue is a slide.

## NOON | LUNCH SUSTAINABLY

At the intersection of the Ourcq and St.-Denis canals, you’ll find a curved wooden structure. That is Ventrus, a portable restaurant that will be staying at La Villette through at least the 2024 Paris Olympics. Guest chefs rotate every few weeks or months to create short, seasonal menus, and the restaurant has programs to recycle its waste and water.

KEY  
STOPS

The **Gustave Moreau Museum** is an under-the-radar house-museum that opens the doors to the studio of the 19th-century painter with a visionary flair for mythological subjects.

**Madame Arthur** has become the cancan-free cabaret of choice for many Parisians, and a symbol of France’s thriving drag scene.

The **Petit Palais**, an underrated gem on the Paris museum circuit, takes visitors on a delightfully random tour of centuries of French art history.

The **Parc de la Villette** is a sprawling urban park with quirky playgrounds and a range of sports activities and cultural venues, like the Paris Philharmonic and the Cité des Sciences.

WHERE  
TO EAT

**La Verrière**, inside the 19th-century InterContinental Paris le Grand Hotel, is a luxurious cafe with plush armchairs under an arresting glass roof.

**Le 975** is an elevated bistro offering smart twists on French cuisine in a quiet part of Montmartre.

**Polissons** serves imaginative dishes derived from traditional French gastronomy in Montmartre, with a six-course mystery menu.

**Bistrot Mee** brings visual flair to Korean cuisine in a Zen-like, elegant environment.

**Aki Boulangerie** offers a Japanese spin on French desserts, like yuzu- or matcha-flavored éclairs.

**Une Glace à Paris** is an award-winning ice-cream shop in the Marais district, with some left-field flavor combinations.

**Pierre Hermé** is synonymous with excellent high-end macarons and has many locations in Paris.

**Bouillon Racine**, a stylish Art Nouveau brasserie, serves well-made French classics like snails and blood sausages.

**Ventrus** is a portable, eco-friendly restaurant that currently brings guest chefs to the Parc de la Villette.

**Jardin 21** is a casual open-air bar and restaurant that doubles as a vegetable garden and community space, open from May to September.

WHERE  
TO STAY

The **Hôtel des Saints-Pères** exudes old-world sophistication, and has a long history of welcoming artists to St.-Germain-des-Prés: The painter Francis Bacon was once a regular. Each room (from 220 euros, or \$240) has personalized décor with paintings, drawings and sculptures. Guests in the Junior Suite Signature (from €400) sleep under a rediscovered 17th-century fresco that stretches across the ceiling.

**Hôtel Mademoiselle** is a cozy, stylish three-star hotel with a cute courtyard for breakfast, conveniently located within walking distance of Gare du Nord (Paris’s Eurostar terminal, with good connections to the airports) as well as Montmartre. Rooms from €150.

With four central locations, **the People** is a budget-friendly option for travelers, with bright, welcoming lobbies, on-site restaurants and rooftop cafes in select hostels. Its flagship in the Marais will take you close to the historical city center. Dorm beds from €50, with private rooms also available.

Paris has stringent regulations to curb **short-term rentals** on websites like Airbnb, and landlords can only rent residential properties for a maximum of 120 days a year.



# Cooking

## What to Make Next Week

OK, OK, Independence Day is looming in our thoughts and on our calendars, with its traditional culinary visions of burgers, thick steaks and corn on the cob — chased maybe by a hazy I.P.A. or a crisp white wine. But consider making room on the grill Tuesday for our shish kebab, with Aleppo or crushed red pepper providing the fireworks. And the tuna melt, tofu and green beans with chile crisp, broiled salmon and asparagus with herbs, and chopped salad with chickpeas, feta and avocado nod to freedom, too, taking just 15 to 30 minutes to prepare.

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DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS.

### Shish Kebab

You can make Naz Deravian's recipe for shish kebab with lamb or beef. Nota bene: You should get the meat into its marinade the night before you cook, so that the yogurt in it has time to tenderize the protein and fill it with the flavors of Aleppo pepper, paprika and cumin. *SAM SIFTON*

TIME: 30 MINUTES, PLUS 2 TO 24 HOURS' MARINATING  
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup plain yogurt
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for serving
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)
- 1 teaspoon Aleppo pepper, or crushed red pepper of choice, plus extra for serving
- 1 teaspoon sweet or smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano, crushed between your fingers
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 pounds boneless lamb leg or shoulder, beef top loin or sirloin, or a combination, excess fat trimmed and meat cut into 1½- to 2-inch cubes
- Grilled bell pepper and onion (optional), for serving
- Flat bread, such as pita, for serving
- Lemon or lime wedges
- Fresh herbs, such as mint and basil (optional), for serving

The kebabs can be made in a broiler or on a stovetop, but they won't achieve the same charred crust that they would on a grill. To broil: Place the kebab skewers on a foil-lined sheet pan and broil on high for about 8 to 10 minutes, turning a few times. Keep a close eye on the kebabs so they don't burn. For stovetop: Heat an oiled grill pan or cast iron skillet over medium-high until hot. Place the kebabs on the skillet and cook, turning a few times, about 10 to 12 minutes total.

1. Place the yogurt, oil, garlic, tomato paste, salt, Aleppo pepper, paprika, cumin, oregano, and black pepper in a medium bowl, and stir to combine well. Add the meat and toss to coat well in the marinade. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours and up to 24 hours.
2. Take the meat out of the fridge 30 minutes prior to grilling. If using wooden skewers, soak them in water for 30 minutes. Heat a gas grill to medium-high (400 degrees), or prepare a hot charcoal grill, and oil the grates. Remove the cubes of meat from the marinade and skewer them. Grill the meat, turning a few times, until cooked to your liking, 12 minutes (for medium-rare) to 15 minutes (for medium) on a gas grill, or 10 minutes (for medium-rare) to 12 minutes (for medium) on a charcoal grill. A little charring is OK, but turn them every couple of minutes so they don't burn and will stay juicy on the inside. Skewer and grill the veggies alongside, if using. Just before serving, throw the bread on the grill to warm through.
3. Place the bread on a serving dish, place the kebabs on the bread, squeeze a little lemon or lime juice over the kebabs, drizzle with a little olive oil, and an extra sprinkling of Aleppo pepper and serve with fresh herbs (if you like).



CON POULOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: JERRIE-JOY REDMAN-LLOYD.

### Tuna Melt

The tuna melt, a diner classic, gets an upgrade in Lidey Heuck's elegant recipe, with chopped cornichons and whole-grain mustard, lots of dill and sharp Cheddar. It's a perfect hand-held meal, though you could go open-faced under the broiler and eat the result with a knife and a fork. *SAM SIFTON*

TIME: 15 MINUTES  
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 3 (6-ounce) cans solid, water-packed tuna, drained
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup finely chopped cornichons or small kosher dill pickles
- 3 tablespoons minced red onion
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 packed tablespoon minced fresh dill (optional)
- 2 teaspoons whole-grain mustard
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 8 slices rye or sourdough bread, cut ½ inch thick
- 8 sandwich slices extra-sharp Cheddar (or 6 ounces shredded)
- 4 tablespoons softened unsalted butter, plus more as needed

1. Place the tuna in a medium bowl and flake with a fork. Add the mayonnaise, cornichons, red onion, lemon juice, dill (if using), mustard, salt and pepper. Mix well.
2. Depending on the size of your bread, spoon ⅓ to ½ cup tuna salad on each of four slices of bread, heaping it in the middle slightly. Divide the cheese among the sandwiches, tearing and arranging the cheese to fit neatly. Place a piece of bread on top of each and generously spread the top piece of each sandwich with about ½ tablespoon butter.
3. Heat a 10-inch skillet over medium-low. Place two sandwiches, buttered side down, in the skillet, and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the bottom pieces of bread are golden brown.
4. Meanwhile, spread the top of the each sandwich with another ½ tablespoon butter. Carefully flip the sandwiches, turn the heat to low, and cook for 3 to 4 more minutes, until the bottoms are browned and the cheese is melted. Repeat with the remaining two sandwiches and serve immediately.



CHRISTOPHER TESTAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: CHRIS LANIER. PROP STYLIST: CARLA GONZALEZ-HART.

### Tofu and Green Beans With Chile Crisp

A block of tofu, a few fistfuls of green beans and my trusty jar of chile crisp. These combine beautifully in my sheet-pan recipe for tofu and green beans with chile crisp, a weeknight boon. "Best tofu I've ever had," said one reader's husband, and the reader agreed: "It's perfection." *SAM SIFTON*

TIME: 30 MINUTES  
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 3 tablespoons chile-crisp condiment, plus more for serving
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1½ tablespoons Chinese black vinegar
- 1½ teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons chopped scallions
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 1 (14-ounce) package extra-firm tofu, drained and sliced crosswise into 8 (½-inch-thick) slabs
- ¾ pound green beans
- 1 tablespoon neutral oil, like canola or grapeseed
- White rice, for serving

1. Heat oven to 450 degrees. In a baking dish or casserole, whisk together the chile crisp, soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil, honey, garlic, ginger, scallions and cilantro.
2. Add the tofu slices to the dish, and coat them with the sauce, then allow to marinate for as long as it takes to heat the oven and trim the green beans.
3. Add the green beans to a large sheet pan, then drizzle the neutral oil on top and toss to coat. Slide the green beans to the sides of the pan, and arrange the slices of tofu in an even layer in the center of the pan. Pour remaining marinade over the tofu, and place in oven.
4. Roast until the green beans start to blister, 20 to 25 minutes. Serve immediately with rice and extra chile crisp on the side.



DANE TASHIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: BARRETT WASHBURNE.

### Broiled Salmon and Asparagus With Herbs

I love this recipe from Yasmin Fahr, which tops broiled salmon (a great way to cook fish, in my opinion) and asparagus with a fresh herb-and-scallion salad. Add rice and you've got a winning meal. *EMILY WEINSTEIN*

TIME: 20 MINUTES  
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 1 bunch cilantro, leaves and tender stems, roughly chopped
- 1 bunch parsley, leaves and tender stems, roughly chopped
- 1 small bunch mint or dill, leaves picked, roughly chopped
- 4 scallions, light green and white parts, sliced
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon red-pepper flakes, according to taste
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus more as needed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more as needed
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 large bunch asparagus, woody ends trimmed
- 4 (4- to 6-ounce) salmon fillets, at least ¾ inch thick

1. In a medium serving bowl, toss together the herbs, scallions, red-pepper flakes, lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of olive oil, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Season with more lemon or oil as needed until the leaves look glossy. Set aside.
2. Heat the broiler with a rack 6 inches from the heat source.
3. In a small bowl, mix the soy sauce and mustard until smooth. Add the asparagus to a large sheet pan, toss with the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil, then season well with salt and pepper. Move the asparagus to the sides, and place the salmon skin side down in the center. Season the salmon with salt and pepper, brush the tops and sides with the soy mixture, then toss the asparagus in the rest of the soy mixture. (Use a paper towel to wipe off excess soy on the sheet pan, as it will smoke.)
4. Broil until the salmon is opaque with a deep brown crust, about 6 to 8 minutes for medium rare, and 8 to 10 minutes for medium, depending on the strength of your broiler and the thickness of the salmon. (Reduce cooking time by 1 to 2 minutes for thinner fillets.) If it looks like it's browning too quickly or smoking excessively, move to a lower rack to finish cooking. Top the salmon and asparagus with the herb salad or serve on the side with a final round of pepper.



LINDA XIAO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: MONICA PIERINI.

### Chopped Salad With Chickpeas, Feta and Avocado

I love a salad where the greens are in equal ratio to the other ingredients, and Lidey Heuck's chopped salad with chickpeas, feta and avocado delivers, with olives and capers for salt and cucumbers for crunch. It's a template. Feel free to get some radishes in there, some halved cherry tomatoes, a little diced onion. Chop, chop! *SAM SIFTON*

TIME: 30 MINUTES  
YIELD: 4 TO 6 SERVINGS

- 2 cups small (½-inch) diced stale bread, buns or pita (about 3 to 4 ounces)
- 6 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 romaine heart, quartered lengthwise and sliced crosswise into ½-inch pieces
- 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 medium (or ½ large) English cucumber, halved lengthwise, seeded and diced
- ½ cup pitted Castelvetrano or other green olives, roughly chopped (about 3 ounces)
- ½ cup thinly sliced scallions (about 2 scallions)
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon drained capers, roughly chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced shallots
- ¼ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 firm, ripe avocado, halved, pitted and diced
- ¾ cup diced or crumbled feta cheese (about 4 ounces)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh herbs, such as dill, basil, mint or parsley, plus more for serving\*

1. Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the diced bread on a sheet pan, drizzle lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss, then bake for 10 to 12 minutes, until well toasted. Set aside to cool.
2. Meanwhile, place the romaine pieces in a large mixing bowl, along with the chickpeas, cucumber, olives and scallions.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together 6 tablespoons olive oil with the vinegar, capers, shallots, mustard, ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper and whisk well. Pour enough dressing over the salad to moisten; toss well. Add the avocado, feta and herbs and toss gently, adding more dressing to taste. Top with the croutons and a generous sprinkle of herbs and serve.